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The Soul's Deepest Questions

AN INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY

By GEORGE P. YOUNG.



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THE Spiritualists' National Union

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Registered Office :

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HANSON G. HEY, Secretary.

OBJECTS :

THE SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL UNION was established to promote, maintain, and extend the propaganda of the facts and teachings of Modern Spiritualism.

PURPOSES :

For this purpose the National Union wishes to strengthen the hands of existing Spiritualist Societies, to unite and consolidate them in a spiritual brotherhood and organisation, to develop and encourage Spiritualist investigation and research, to foster international relationships with the Spiritualist and kindred associations of other lands, to make fraternal arrangements and co-operate with progressive bodies working for human advancement, to arrange for conferences, lectures, and demonstrations, and to issue explanatory, instructive, and inspiring literature on the subject of Modern Spiritualism.

With the recognition and maintenance of the independent, internal government of Societies, the National Union desires to bring about and increase mutual understanding, fraternity, co-operation, and consolidation amongst Spiritualists generally.

BENEVOLENT WORK.

A National Fund of Benevolence, supported by voluntary contributions, is administered on behalf of aged workers in the Movement, and others in distress.

Particulars for the affiliation of Societies and individual members, and other information, on application to the General Secretary, as above.

October, 1913.

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The Soul's Deepest Questions.

THE ATTITUDE OF CONTEMPLATION.

AMID the turmoil of this planetary existence, the strife, heat, and burden of the earth-life, with its cares, vicissitudes, and distractions which exhaust the energies, and limit and obscure the outlook and insight, it is well, at times, *to enter the silence*, there to pass in review the experiences of life, to discover their origin, purpose, and inter-dependence, to survey the whole field of Nature and conscious existence, and thus realise more fully *our final relationship with this universe and the Great Power manifesting through all*. In a word, we thus endeavour to find *the meaning and purpose of life*.

ITS RELIGIOUS IMPLICATIONS.

This is the *essence of religious aspiration*. To the contemplative philosopher all parts, all departments, all the phenomena of Nature, from the vast stellar bodies of the firmament to the lowly micro-organisms of the stagnant ponds, are co-ordinated and linked in a unified system. Like the raiment of Jesus, Nature is without seam throughout—one perfect whole—the phenomenal manifestation or outer garment of God—the *Immanent Mind* of the universe. In Pope's divine couplet,

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul.

WHAT IS RELIGION ?

RELIGION (from Latin *re*—back ; and *ligo*—to bind) is that science and philosophy which examines the links binding us to the First Cause or Immanent Mind of this Cosmos in which we live and move and have our being. Science and religion are thus indissolubly united. Deep investigations in the realms of Nature—and the *facts, evidences, or phenomena, of Modern Spiritualism are natural, not SUPERNATURAL*—proclaim our reverence for the Creator who manifests through this, His handiwork. Well said Mendeleéf : “Knowing how contented, free, and joyful is life in realms of science, one fervently wishes that many would enter its portals.”

The mind of the student is expanded and sustained by the adoring survey of the vastness of Nature, so that religion becomes "*man's normal subjective response to the sum of known cosmic phenomena, taken as an intelligible whole.*" To the purblind materialist NATURE MAY APPEAR RED IN TOOTH AND CLAW, and his attitude towards her one of revulsion, rebellion, and distrust. But oh! how different will be that response when the mighty revelations of Spiritualism are borne in on the mind, when we know for certain that *no love can die*, when "we discern the bewildering sum of things, beyond all bounds of sect or system, broadening and heightening into a moral Cosmos such as our race could scarcely conceive till now!"

Most men's subjective response to their environment falls *below the level of true religious thought*. It is limited, modified, and distorted—scattered into cravings, or embittered by resentment, or distorted by superstitious fears. The deepest insight, the most profound thankfulness, the most complete, inspiring, and sustaining response, the noblest religious enthusiasm are the *priceless possessions of the Spiritualist* who usually after a painful pilgrimage through the valley of negation—which clears the mind of theological prejudices, and makes one as humble as a child—has climbed philosophy's higher pinnacle, and from its loftier standpoint can exclaim with sublime and triumphant faith, "All things work together for good to them that know God."

THIS TRANSITION THROUGH DOUBT TO CERTAINTY is necessary in the development of the soul. In early years under hereditary influences and training we imbibe puny notions of God, Nature, life, and the universe. Then when initiated into the serious business of men comes a searching period of questioning. Reason refuses to be silent or to be lulled and deceived by verbal jugglery or sophistry. Doubts prevail, the skies lower, the horizon creeps nearer, and man's soul is *pent up in the prison house of negation and despair*, whose horrors are the nightmare of existence. These painful epochs and hours of trial rid the mind of false preconceptions, develop independence of thought, and strengthen and deepen the individuality. ONE IS CALLED TO FIGHT THE BATTLE ALONE. Many an indifferent exterior hides a breaking heart, and

a calm outward demeanour masks the raging volcanic fires within.

THE PILGRIMAGE OF A SOUL.

The life-history of Frederick W. H. Myers, who did so much to bring order amid the chaos of psychic research, is paralleled in the progress of many. His instinctive rebellion, like that of Edmund Gurney, was made clear when he wrote: "If the First Cause has summoned into life on earth, though it were but one single man alone miserable amid all the happy; one single soul foredoomed to eternal protest and inescapable woe, then that First Cause is not a God to whom a good man can offer love, or a just man worship." SCEPTICISM, *so necessary to intellectual and moral salvation*, asserted its purifying and liberating force. In the recent memorial service his co-worker, Lodge, revealed the mainspring of his arduous labours: "At one time, to his sceptical mind, annihilation seemed the probable doom both of the individual and of the race; and it was his instinctive rebellion against any such ghastly conclusion that constituted the motive power which so greatly influenced contemporaries, and has probably left an impress upon the world for all time. It became his life-study to find a scientific proof of the immortality of the soul, and thus TO VINDICATE THE MEANING AND INTENTION OF THE CREATOR."

In his own self-revelment Myers confessed: "When, after deriving much happiness from Christian faith, I felt myself forced by growing knowledge to recognise that the evidence for that culminant instance of spirit-life was not adequate, as standing alone, to justify conviction, I did honestly surrender that great joy, although its loss was more grievous to me than anything else which has happened to me in life."

Often have Spiritualists encountered such strong-thinking men and women whose native integrity and intellectual force have enabled them to GROW OUT OF THE SWADDLING CLOTHES OF ORTHODOXY. They come to the investigation of the evidences and teachings of Modern Spiritualism as a *last resort*. Uncomplaining, self-sufficient, and calm, they are reconciled to fate, expecting little of a seemingly confusing and unpromising enquiry. But within the profounder regions of their being there

is the deep, unexpressed hope that the blank, dreary outlook upon life may be brightened by illuminating revelations from other realms of light, life, and love, and that *knowledge, reason, and intuition* may supplement each other and be complete in triune confirmation. The reward of patient, persistent, and systematic experiment and enquiry in the realm of psychic research is indeed great. In Spiritualist investigation the truth-loving student REALISES THE TRUTH OF THE APHORISM: "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness (right-wiseness or true wisdom) for they shall be filled."

So it proved with Frederick Myers. He continues to reveal the inner soul-struggle: "Then with little hope—nay, almost with reluctant scorn—but with the feeling that no last and least chance of the great discovery should be thrown aside, I turned to such poor efforts at psychical research as were at that time possible; and now it is only AFTER THIRTY YEARS of such study as I have been able to give that I say to myself at last, '*Thou hast what thine whole heart desired,*' that I recognise that for me this fresh evidence has filled me with a sense of insight and of thankfulness such as even my first ardent Christianity did not bestow."

In the glowing memorial tribute Sir Oliver Lodge comments: "Such scientific proof of the immortality of the soul, in his own judgment, and in the judgment of some of his co-workers, he was ultimately privileged to find. By critical and comprehensive and truly scientific study of weird and ultra-normal facts in human nature, which he strung together and illustrated in an ingenious and powerful manner, he gradually rose after years of doubt and hesitation to A SUBLIME AND LIVING FAITH in the *Divine ordering of the universe and its harmony with the highest aspirations of man.*"

When this profound conviction has been gained or acquired by the Spiritualist, he can appreciate and USE THE MAGIC STAFF of the harmonial philosopher, Andrew Jackson Davis: "Under all circumstances keep an even mind." As we now see, not the "calmness" of indifference, ignorance, and sluggishness, but that strong and abiding faith based on deeper insight and completer knowledge of Nature's workings.

The clash of the molecules in the raindrop may betoken chaos, conflict, and confusion to immediate and nearer vision, but from a wider perspective the raindrop is beautiful, harmonious, and complete, refracting the sunlight to form the majestic rainbow-arch on the cloud-screen. So with man as a manifestation of the Sun of Being.

ITS MORAL AND ETHICAL BEARING.

By contemplation man may receive light on his pathway of duty. He may observe the influences operating in Nature, he may study the principles of divine unfoldment, and shape and subdue his will accordingly. In past ages man was moulded largely by influences beyond his knowledge and control, but with the deeper enquiry into Nature, and fuller understanding of her beneficence, mankind is passing from the age of unconscious to that of CONSCIOUS PROGRESS. Man's highest privilege and happiness is to obediently and eternally co-operate with Divinity in the scheme of progressive unfoldment within and around him. As one has said, thus we become "God juniors."

With Myers this belief was based in the first instance on the results of scientific investigation, but it *ascended* into the atmosphere of religion itself; and by its beacon light did much to kindle a like faith and enthusiasm among those who otherwise might have held aloof from an unpopular and apparently unpromising reign of enquiry.

We Spiritualists are engaged in the pioneer work of demonstrating to men that the heavens are not brass, but that LIFE PIERCES THE VEIL and unites the two schemes of existence—the physical and the spiritual, the mundane prison-house and the more extensive cosmic sphere of activity. When THIS STABLE FOUNDATION of verified and systematised truths has been well laid, a more winsome superstructure can then be erected—the temple of loftier religious aspirations, broader philosophic conception, more symbolical poetry, ennobled literature, purified art, inspiring music. *Science shall then "be sublimed into philosophy and kindled by religion into a burning flame."*

THE VALUE OF SOLITUDE.

By withdrawing from the stress of the physical conditions, by leaving the "foul magnetism" of cities and assemblages of men, and entering Nature's solitudes the

philosopher may not only be physically rested and recuperated, but he may come into closer contact with those higher influences which nourish and stimulate the soul. This plan of securing inward peace and concentration has been practised by all the great minds who have written indelibly on the pages of human history.

Jesus of Nazareth spoke of it as ENTERING THE KINGDOM of heaven. A heaven or haven is merely a place of refuge. All is calm within, though storms rage without, and rocks, shoals, and quicksands loom threateningly before the view of the weary but intrepid mariner. At one period the Nazarene in a fit of irritability, which sensitives suffer when prostrated by nervous exhaustion, in an unreasonable manner cursed a fig-tree. Recognising his over-wrought condition and the need for maintaining the highest pitch of physical, mental, and spiritual efficiency during the critical times of his later ministry, he RETIRED TO THE SOLITUDES OF THE DESERT, where it was more possible to receive the vivifying influences of a higher life and function in a world beyond the limitations of sense.

Great world reformers like Buddha, Aristotle, Cromwell, Garibaldi, and Mazzini showed their fondness for solitude in natural surroundings. Lombroso, the famous authority on the abnormal psychology of criminality and genius, previously noted this as an eccentricity, a symptom of degeneration. But to Spiritualists, who recognise the reality of a world beyond this sphere of sense-perception, these withdrawals to Nature's solitudes for self-communion, for contemplation, for concentrated thought, and for communion with the higher powers and advanced intelligences directing human life and destiny, were NECESSARY FOR SOUL INSPIRATION, strengthening, and growth.

In "Evolution and Phrenology" Mr. Alfred Thomas Story has given a most readable sketch of a most important aspect of the history of human kind. The following excerpt will give some idea of the trend of the book: "The *spiritually-fed man* is the only full man. He alone is TRULY REPRESENTATIVE OF HUMAN LIFE at its best, and he only approaches the ideal because he has a brain conditioned for the reception of a force or influence the source of which lies beyond the terrestrial and mundane sphere."

In this industrial age, when material advances have been so rapid and so overwhelming, the majority of mankind SEEM BURIED IN A SLOUGH. Overwork, exhaustion, improper nourishment, underfeeding, and over-indulgence of appetite, imperfect education, the vulgar and cocksure assertiveness of materialism, are among the factors and tendencies checking the development and cultivation of those finer sensibilities that link men on to the higher order of life. The soul in its expression seems choked, hindered, and restrained by the too heavy burden of flesh. It appears to be fighting its way to expression through the physical limitations.

A PARALYSING TENDENCY.

A few weeks ago, when asked to address a labour association on "Future Stages of Human Progress," I pleaded for the recognition of the influences of the super-physical environment. To hard-headed workingmen, who have discarded the old-time theology, and who rejoice in the name of "freethinkers," this is often a thankless task. In the subsequent discussion an old foundry labourer arose, and after a keen, searching glance at myself, such as given by a man deeply moved, commenced to speak. In impressive and deliberate tones, with a convincing eloquence rarely heard, he laid bare his soul-agony. He said, "I was brought up among the glens of northern Scotland, but driven by stress of circumstance to become an iron-worker. The task allotted to me is so monotonous and mechanical that often, after a few months of such depressing and exhausting toil as a poorly-paid labourer, *I feel myself becoming an automaton*—part and parcel of the vast machinery around me, and I wonder if I have or am a soul. Only when I leave the forge and city and hear for a few days the voices of nature can I recognise that I have an independent individuality, and feel that I am a self-conscious, responsible human being."

A PROPHECY OF THE FUTURE.

In the present epoch of civilisation, through the stress of industrialism and commercialism, men are slowly learning the benefits of *co-operation* and *organisation*. Nature's secrets are being wrested from her grasp and applied for the ultimate benefit of mankind. The human standard of comfort is slowly rising, and the

conditions of life are becoming more complicated. To become adapted to this changing and complex environment we have developing a more highly-strung, cultured, and refined people—a *race of sensitives*. The old vulgar “four-bottle” man, the brutalised commercial man, and the ignorant evangelical who merely seeks his *own* soul’s salvation, are gradually disappearing from the pale of civilised society.

Men and women are becoming clean and healthy in their physical modes of living, loftier in thought, wider in sympathy, and more aspiring spiritually.

THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY.

A daring spirit of invention, fostered and stimulated by the discoveries of science, has vastly increased and heightened man’s powers of creating wealth. With suitable organisation this would reduce the effort required for rendering well-being accessible to all to such a degree that no Utopia of antiquity, or of the Middle Ages, or even of the earlier portion of the last century, could have dreamt of such possibilities. The discovery of the tremendous electric energies locked up in matter, and of the wonderful chemical transformations carried on by germs or bacteria, await future industrial application. For the first time in the history of civilisation mankind has reached a point where *the means of satisfying its needs are in excess of the needs themselves*.

To impose, therefore, as has hitherto been done in the progressive stages of slavery, serfdom, and industrialism, the curse of misery and degradation upon vast divisions of mankind, in order to secure well-being for the few, is needed no more. Well-being can be secured for all without overwork of any.

Ethically and morally men are learning the lessons of COSMOPOLITANISM AND HUMAN SOLIDARITY. The function of ethics—which points out our duties to others—is not to insist on the defects of man, and to reproach him with his “sins,” as to act in a positive direction by appealing to man’s best instincts—to love, courage, fraternity, self-respect, concordance with one’s ideal. Ethics takes up human progress where materialism terminates, and teaches man to seek the larger life.

“It tells to man that if he desires to have a life in which all his forces, physical, intellectual, and

emotional, should find a full exercise, he must once and forever abandon the idea that such a life is attainable on the path of disregard for others." Thus, as Matthew Arnold taught, we are in the presence of a *power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness.*

Physically, intellectually, morally, ethically, and spiritually all the requirements of future progress to a more abundant life are fulfilled by Modern Spiritualism.

In physiological and psychological evolution the progress of the race seems to make for perfection along the lines of the nervous system, in the acquisition of more delicate senses, of greater nervous sensibility, and of vaster means of information. The changing social, mental, and spiritual environment demands the cultivation of sensitiveness. Europeans are more emotional and more sensitive to pain than certain savage tribes or nations in the twilight dawn of civilisation. But we do *not* stigmatise Europeans as *degenerates*. Those who have studied first-class athletes recognise that great sensitiveness is usually conjoined to remarkable physical strength.

Well may Dr. Maxwell exclaim:—"We ought to consider mediums (sensitives) as precious beings, as forerunners of the future type of our race. Why should we not see superior beings ahead of us, beacons, as it were, on the route we have to follow?" The sufferings of sensitives, especially when handicapped by ill-health, disease, and exhaustion, are exceedingly keen, but only those of finer fibre can enjoy the higher pleasures of existence—art, music, literature, poetry, and philosophy. Tennyson expresses this idea:—

"Tis life whereof our nerves are scant,
More life and fuller that we want.

This fact—that the most highly developed of our species desire a higher and more abundant life here on earth—is a strong scientific and philosophic presumption in favour of immortality. *Racial intuitions* demand a life beyond the physical limitations where latent faculties can be fully unfolded and exercised.

Spiritualism demonstrates that the heart's desires and premonitions, that the intuitions and pre-visions of saints, seers, prophets, mediums, and little children, in all ages, in all climes, and among all races of men, were

not based on hallucinations or morbid imaginings. Men of genius like Buddha, Socrates, Aristotle, Kant, and Shelley have always been remarkable for their intuitive powers. In the light of psychic science—which has investigated the range and activity of consciousness—we must hold that *intuition is a direct and certain method of apprehending truth*. The scientific method is a cumbersome mode of enquiry, but, when not disturbed by strong preconceptions and prejudices, the intuitions are trustworthy, for by their aid we appreciate truth at first-hand. Intuition is also superior to reason; but in setting forth conclusions and philosophic views to others we employ reason, as applied in systematic, logical, and scientific modes of enquiry. Intuitions pertain to the individual, but the language and method of science are universal.

THE SPIRITUALIST EPOCH FORETOLD.

Immanuel Kant, the founder of modern philosophy, was as remarkable for his intuitional as his reasoning powers. More than half a century before the advent of Modern Spiritualism he wrote thus:—

“ I confess I am much inclined to assert the existence of *immaterial* beings in this world, and to class my soul itself in the category of these beings. (In his use of the word *immaterial* Kant does *not* mean *un-sub-stantial*.) We can imagine the possibility of the existence of immaterial beings without the fear of being refuted, though, at the same time, without the hope of being able to *demonstrate* their existence by reason. Such spiritual beings would exist in space, and, the latter notwithstanding, would remain penetrable for material beings, because their presence would imply an acting power in space, but not a filling of it, *i.e.*, a resistance causing solidity. It is, therefore, as good as demonstrated, or it could be easily proved if we were to enter into it at some length; or, better still, *it will be proved* in the future—I do not know where and when—that also in this life the human soul stands in an indissoluble communion with all the immaterial beings of the spiritual world; that it produces effects in them, and in exchange receives impressions from them, without, however, becoming conscious of them, so long as all stands well. It would be a blessing if such a systematic constitution of the spiritual world,

as conceived by us, had not merely to be inferred from the *too hypothetical* conception of the spiritual nature generally, but would be inferred, or at least conjectured as probable, from some real and generally acknowledged *observation*."

Modern Spiritualism, which applies the method of science, observation, and experiment to the study of "divine things," is the fulfilment of Kant's remarkable and intuitive prophecy or anticipation. Spiritualism not only scatters the theories of materialism to the four winds, but it goes further, and *liberates the mind of mankind*.

Spiritualism banishes every form of priestcraft and autocracy, conquers and drives away every phase of physical, mental, social, and spiritual tyranny, and places every man and woman upon the firm foundation of truth, natural law, and independence.

As Frederick Myers, in his masterly epilogue, proclaimed: "The discoveries (of the soul's transcendent powers) should prompt, as nothing else would have prompted, toward the ultimate achievement of that programme of scientific dominance which the 'Instauratio Magna' proclaimed for mankind. Bacon foresaw the gradual victory of observation and experiment—the triumph of actual analysed fact—in every department of human study—in every department save one. The realm of "divine things" he left to Authority and Faith. I here urge that that great exemption need be no longer made. I claim that there now exists an incipient method of getting at this divine knowledge also, with the same certainty, the same calm assurance with which we make our steady progress in the knowledge of terrene things. The authority of creeds and Churches will thus be replaced by the authority of observation and experiment. The impulse of faith will resolve itself into a reasoned and resolute imagination, bent upon raising even higher than now the highest ideals of man."

The only Bible acknowledged by Spiritualists is the ever-present

BIBLE OF NATURE,

to whose pages one can ever turn for guidance, for inspiration, and for sustenance during life's progressive journey. The higher the development of the individual the broader will be the perspective, and the deeper the

insight. We shall all receive "as we are capable of receiving." Men see in nature what they are big enough to see—and no more.

The student can now undertake to answer the age-long enquiry,

IS THIS A MORAL UNIVERSE?

Immanuel Kant demanded three pre-requisites to satisfy the requirements of the moral law—the *existence of God, the immortality of the human soul, and the freedom of the individual.*

Spiritualism shows God as Infinite Spirit, revealed as the Immanent Mind of the Universe, whose perfect wisdom and justice is perfect love. The amassed, severely tested, and systematised knowledge of psychic activities already accumulated shows that the question of a life after death is a demonstrable proposition. Gradually this is developing into a universal conception. Spiritualism is also the most powerful influence working for human freedom—physical, mental, moral, social, and spiritual. "Perfect love (the perfect trust in, the willing obedience to, and the co-operation with the Divine) doth cast out fear, for fear hath torment."

In this connection the ancient drama

THE BOOK OF JOB

is of entrancing interest and application. But here let us pause and turn aside to perform a *most necessary and important duty*. It must be admitted that the vast majority of men and women manifest no interest in science and philosophy. Why is this? Lack of education, pressure of economic circumstance, and the coarseness of their environment account for much. But these handicaps would be largely overcome if they were not *enthralled by a strange mediæval superstition* that all they require to know to illumine their pathway in life is contained in the pages of the orthodox Bible. What arrant nonsense!

Chemistry and physical sciences, which reveal the marvellous constitution of matter and the tremendous energies locked up therein which may be used in the service of mankind, have no interest for such people. Mathematics, the purest and most serviceable of sciences, which studies the great problems of space and relation-

ships, they discard. Biology, which shows the wonderful structure and development of physical organisms, arouses in them no intense curiosity. Psychology, which examines the working of the soul, has no revelations for their sluggish intellects. The study of ethics, moral philosophy, and sociology, which concern the ordering of a man's conduct and his relationships to his fellows, are to them mere idle pastimes. Anthropology, which investigates the steps by which mankind rose from brute savagery to civilisation, they have never heard of. But why continue? With their ignorance they are content.

The agnostic reaction which began in the time of the Renaissance has not yet completed its grand work. "What *arrested* for fifteen hundred years the intellectual advance of mankind?" asks Dr. Savage. "The early Church made the enormous mistake of accepting the idea that certain old books of law and history and poetry and legend and tradition, which had come into its hands from the Jews, constituted an infallible, divine revelation, that told the world all that the world needed to know, both about this earth and about the unseen. And its reverence for these books as infallible and inspired made it wicked to ask questions or to study. So that for a thousand or fifteen hundred years the intellectual advance of the world in regard to this intellectual outside knowledge practically came to an end."

What a pitiable attitude of mind this has induced! Recently I was invited to lecture on psychical science before a Young Men's Christian Association. And for befogged intellects, puny conceptions, and quibbling sophistry commend me to such organisations. In the subsequent discussion a tall man arose, and to my amazement said, "Oh! if we believe in a Saviour we need not investigate deep questions."

More accustomed as I was to the broadening platform of Agnosticism and Spiritualism, I could only gaze in consternation and pity, and murmur, "Poor, cowardly wretch! What an awakening will be yours when you pass to the other side of the veil."

These people never study their Bible. On one occasion I asked a very intelligent and most upright working-man, who had been an enthusiastic evangelical, as to what made him a confirmed agnostic. His answer

was unexpectedly illuminating:—"I was confined to bed by a serious illness, and read the whole Bible through three times. The first time I got a shock. The second reading made me sceptical, and the third reading caused me to take the agnostic position."

ANTHROPOLOGICAL LIGHT ON THE BIBLE.

Biblical views on the after-life show the same stages of development as do all other speculative and philosophic ideas. Therefore, the Bible should be studied in the light of anthropology, the science of civilisation, or the study which seeks to understand how mankind came to be as they are.

The earlier books of the Old Testament—the so-called books of Moses—were the science manuals (Genesis—origins, beginnings), history annals (Exodus—nation's rise to independence), priestly ceremonials (Leviticus), census register (Numbers), and moral code (Deuteronomy—or book of duty) of the ancient Jews. Probably they were finally committed to writing by Ezra, after descending as verbal traditions for nine hundred years.

The wonderful tombs of the Egyptians and their practice of embalming the dead bodies showed that they held the strongest kind of *imaginative*, speculative, or theosophical belief in another life. Yet Moses, who was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, in giving shape to the Hebrew state and religion, takes absolutely no account whatever of any belief in any other life than this.

The primitive vague belief in *an underground world*, where the shades of the dead led a thin, undesirable, colourless existence, was in the minds of this semi-barbaric, nomadic race. But this in no wise affected or moulded their social relationships, moral code, politics, or even their religion. For flagrant wrong-doing men are wiped out of existence. The rewards held out for goodness all pertain to this earthly life—health, long life, many children, wealth, social honours, friends, and fame.

REVOLT AGAINST MATERIALISM.

But when the Jews had reached a higher stage of economic, intellectual, and social development, *an ethical sense* sprang up. The claims of *justice*, the most fundamental demand of the human heart and mind, had to be

met. The theories of materialism would not work, and the book of Job, a splendid philosophic drama, in which the inner life is portrayed, concerns itself with the problems that sprang up and required solution.

It was observed that good people did not necessarily enjoy better health than bad people, nor live to a ripe old age more surely. They were not always blessed with children, nor honoured among their own people. The prizes and desirable rewards of life fell to the bad people as frequently as to the virtuous.

Of necessity, as has universally been the case, there sprang up from these experiences the belief in a future life of rewards and punishments. It was contended, "If God be righteous there must be a reward for goodness, and punishment sometime and somewhere for wrong. If it does not appear in this world, then it must appear in some other world." Hence the gradual rise of the conception of an after-existence where manifest inequalities should be adjusted.

Thus, in the magnificent drama of Job, under the burning Oriental sun, the ancient sage and poet, at a crisis in his life, when material and social ruin threatened to overwhelm him, and the clouds of depression had settled deep on his soul, propounded that question of questions, "If a man die, shall he live again?" And from Egypt to India, from Babylon to Greece, from Alexandria to Rome, and the later civilisations of the West, when ethics, morality, and religion blossom forth in the nations, the self-same soul-cry has been uttered.

THE BASIS OF ALL RELIGIONS.

From time immemorial a philosophy of life has been taught by Osiris, Lao-tse, Zoroaster, Buddha, Socrates, and others, whose names have passed beyond mortal ken. The religion of the ancient sage is of unknown antiquity. Such words as natural religion, pantheism, platonism, mysticism, do but express or intensify varying aspects of its main underlying conception.

That conception is the *co-existence and interpenetration of a real or spiritual with this material or phenomenal world*. Mark the expression, "a real or spiritual world." When the investigator is convinced of the genuineness of the phenomena of Spiritualism he has, usually up to that time, conducted his thinking in terms of materialism.

He seems to look upon spirit manifestations as secondary effects, and physical appearances and activities as of prime importance. Slowly he has to *readjust his modes of thought*, demonstrating what Hegel indicated when he proclaimed that the function of philosophy was to give a man an inverted view of things, to see the world as if he were standing on his head.

WHICH IS THE ABIDING WORLD?

Spiritual faculties function in a sphere beyond the physical. All measurements in the physical sciences—sound, heat, light, magnetism, electricity—are based on the law of the square of distances. For example, if we stand four yards from the fire we receive one-sixteenth of the heat received when only a yard away.

But in the psychic field *telepathic impulses* have been conveyed and received over distances of half a mile and five thousand miles. By rigid laws of physical measurement we would be compelled to say the supposed physical originating "brain wave" was one million times more powerful in the latter case than in the former. If this were so the brain tissue would be raised to the tremendous heat of incandescence and be completely destroyed. Therefore telepathy is not due to ether waves originated by rapidly moving brain molecules. It is due to super-physical, meta-etherial causes. *Telæsthesia* (travelling clairvoyance), or vision at a distance, I have known to function over distances of one-quarter mile and three hundred miles. Apply the principles of scientific measurement. The distances are as one is to twelve hundred. One psychic, from the standpoint of physical measurements, we conclude was more than one million times (1,440,000) as sensitive a recording instrument than the other, or the light by which the distant scenery was observed was more than one million times as intense in the latter case as in the former. Such conclusions *reduce the matter to an absurdity*. Therefore telepathy and telæsthesia are independent of our ordinary physical or material conditions, and we are logically driven to conclude that *the obvious material environment—which is all that most men recognise—does not exhaust the faculties nor cover the phenomena of human life*.

Thus we indicate that mind can only *partially* express itself through the brain and organism. The inspirations

of genius, the revelations of dream life, the visions of the saint and ecstatic prove that "*there exists a still more comprehensive consciousness, yet profounder faculties, from which the waking consciousness of earth-life is a mere selection, partial expression, or fragment, but which re-asserts itself in all its plenitude after the liberating change of death.*"

Life and mind, though incarnated on earth, therefore belong to a higher category of things than the physical, and we see that the soul's true home is the super-physical, meta-etherial environment, or the spiritual world.

This earth-condition is a mere appearance—a procession of phenomena, a world of symbols. Psychometry, as exercised in retro-cognition and pre-vision, shows that time and space pertain to earth-states, and that we are living in *an eternal present*. The spiritual world is thus of transcendent importance, being the world of final realities. The material world is a kind of precipitation from this more abiding condition of things. But this thought or conception the materialistic Western mind can only grasp with difficulty.

The human race has always had a faculty for apprehending some dim and scattered tokens and prefigurements of a true world (the spiritual) of life and love.

Dim and scattered tokens, to our finite understanding and imprisoned minds, we admit! But as we develop greater breadth of mind and clearness of insight their value is enhanced and appreciated. Often in presenting the evidence and claims of Spiritualism to others, have I seen the supercilious sneer and heard the jeering tones of the sluggish, ignorant, but conceited, as in condescending manner they exclaim, "Oh! I have investigated Modern Spiritualism, but the evidence is so trivial, and the supposed communications are so crude, vague, and bewildering, that I gave up the study of the subject."

When this is uttered in an offensive way, I usually retort, "Ah, me! The vulgarity and the poverty are not in the evidences themselves, but are merely reflections of the puny minds of the investigators." Then the band begins to play!

THE IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE THINGS.

Only great minds can estimate and apprehend the importance of little things. To illustrate this point, I

vividly recollect an aged science lecturer, one of the early founders of the secularist movement, describing an interview he had with the venerable Charles Darwin, whose researches and generalisations completely revolutionised the modern study of the phenomena of physical life. Darwin had issued a little treatise on earth-worms, showing their value as agriculturists, because in their search for vegetable food they digested or passed the soil through their bodies and deposited a fertile mould one foot deep in every twenty-six years.

Said the old Doctor: "Wishing to say something smart and pleasing, I looked up into the noble countenance of the venerable scientist and philosopher, and with the cocksureness of a young man I exclaimed, 'Why should such a majestic intellect, able to grasp so completely the mighty factors and principles of Nature's working concern itself with the examination of lowly organisms like the earth-worm.' 'Never can I forget,' said the narrator, 'the attitude and response of Charles Darwin. Turning to me, with fatherly dignity and reproof, he laid his hands gently on my shoulder, and spoke thus with great deliberateness: 'No fact in nature is too small, too insignificant for observation, for verification, for classification, and for generalisation. I *spent forty years* in the examination of the life-history of earth-worms before writing that little treatise.'"

SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS AND REVOLUTION.

The great advances in science and discovery are always based on the study of the little things—the *residual phenomena*—usually neglected by the complacent and ordinary individual. Someone, stimulated by that intense and disinterested curiosity which all originating minds possess, commences the examination. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Dr. Gilbert, of Colchester, observed that amber rubbed on the coat sleeve caused wisps of straw, shreds of wool, and fragments of paper in the vicinity to dance in a fantastic manner. Dr. Gilbert recognised that here was an indication of a newly-discovered force in nature. His contemporaries perhaps imagined he was entering his second childhood when demonstrating his experiments. Yet, from the simple, trivial experiments of Dr. Gilbert the great applied science of *electricity* has sprung, that has almost annihilated

time and distance, united the nations, revolutionised industry, and altered the aspect of the earth's surface. Isaac Newton spent many of his leisure hours in blowing soap bubbles to watch the rainbow hues which appeared as the light shone through them. Of course, a boyish pursuit, beneath the dignity of the greatest physicist of all time. But from this seemingly childish pastime arose the discovery of *spectrum analysis*, by means of which we can tell the chemical constitution of even the distant stars.

The Romans observed that wine exposed to the air changed to vinegar, and the housewife that uncovered butter turned rancid. Awkward and inconvenient occurrences, no doubt, though hardly deserving of attention. But Kircher, Francesco Redi, and Pasteur asked why and how such changes were brought about. Then was made the stupendous discovery of the presence, work, and influence of *germs*, *bacilli*, or *bacteria*. This revelation has completely changed modern medicine, and holds out tremendous possibilities to the agriculturalist, chemist, and manufacturer.

So, from the "Rochester knockings," from the study of despised raps and table tiltings, the dream-like utterances of the trance medium, the epileptic-like impersonations, the clairvoyant visions, and filmy, phantasmal materialisations, is springing a new and grander science of life. The tiny spirit-rap is leading us all the way from the dying child to the living archangel. It shows us that this earth-life is merely the prelude or stage toward a higher life, with nobler institutions and sweeter conditions, a type of which may yet be realised on earth. Said Professor De Morgan : "The Spiritualists, beyond a doubt, are in the track that has led to all advancement in physical science. Their opponents are the representatives of those who have striven against progress. I have said that the deluded spirit-rappers are on the right track. They have the spirit and the method of the grand times when those paths were cut through the uncleared forest in which it is now the daily routine to walk. What was that spirit? It was the spirit of universal examination wholly unchecked by fear of being detected in the investigation of nonsense."

Confident in the verdict of the future, when the merits of their labours will be recognised, the Spiritualists are

working steadily on to lay broad and deep the foundations of a nobler scheme of things. They are not deterred by the jeers and ridicule of the vulgar, or the supercilious attitude of self-constituted critics. They are indifferent to clerical attacks, ignorant press misrepresentations, and the fears of the timid and superstitious. They are in possession of lofty revelations and profound truths, and these sustain them and stimulate a noble enthusiasm for their dissemination.

RESIDUAL PHENOMENA.

The incoherence, crudity, and triviality of many of the evidences of Spiritualism are not reasons for neglecting their careful examination. Important and elevated facts are often communicated, but only *trivial incidents* will completely demonstrate personal identity, which is the prime consideration. The conditions affecting the communications are only being slowly understood—the imperfections and limitations of the medium, the inter-cosmic conditions existing between the communicating spirit and the medium, and the dazed, bewildered, delirious condition of the communicating spirit, who has to become confined in, and adjusted to, mediumistic and mundane limitations.

The ancient Greeks accepted the immortality of the soul. Their conception of it seemed to be drawn from phenomena resulting from or given through imperfect and misunderstood mediumship. As a consequence the Greeks represented the after-life as *a meagre and undesirable mode of existence*.

When science and philosophy were established by the labours of Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato, a critical examination was made of all forms of thought and belief. The results have been pertinently set forth by Professor J. H. Hyslop:—"When scepticism and culture arose they drove away the gods and the belief in immortality. Thenceforth the Greeks lived for science and art. They were by nature passionate worshippers of the beauties of nature, and having come to the conviction that another life after death involved an existence inferior to the present, they gave themselves up to delirium of terrestrial pleasures, the 'carnal life of sense,' and not having the ideal and conviction of the brotherhood of man to steady

their social and political life, ended in the debaucheries of Epicureanism."

Sluggish and timid men and women who oppose or fear the spread of new ideas often quote Shakespeare, who puts in the mouth of one of his characters the statement: "The bourne, from which no traveller returns," forgetting that Shakespeare's two most powerful tragedies, "Macbeth" and "Hamlet," centre round the post-mortem appearances of the assassinated.

An appeal is often made to the silence of nature on the existence of a future world and life. But Spiritualists know this silence to be an imaginary fact, and deny the truth of such a claim.

The evidence of modern Spiritualism is only a *small modicum* of the phenomena better investigated and attested than the psychic manifestations that pervade history, and which we can readily see from modern knowledge of mediumship, are universal in time and place.

Perhaps for generations to come our truest faith and duty will lie in the patient attempt to unravel and co-ordinate from tangled and confused phenomena some traces of the supernal world.

SPIRITUALISM BECOMING CONVENTIONAL AND RESPECTABLE.

The Spiritualists of experience can testify to the changing attitude of the mind of the general public towards their enquiry. Gradually the peculiar terminology of Spiritualism is becoming current in literature and ordinary intercourse.

This is a natural and orderly development, similar to that shown in the spread of all new ideas: "The residual phenomena of human experience have been neglected and their significance ignored. The blame must not be shifted upon nature, but upon the pride and stupidity of the respectable classes. They fought Copernican astronomy, Newtonian gravitation, Darwinism, the existence of meteors, and hypnotism. Then when they were proved they appropriated them, and made it the mark of intelligence to believe them. The more the respectable change the more they remain the same. They will pass through the same development in psychic research, and when survival after death is proved, in spite of social ostracism it will be the respectable thing to believe and to teach.

But the plea of nature's silence on the matter cannot be made beyond the point that its revelation on the subject is not so clear as that of the bodily life."—"Science and a Future Life."

Fragmentary and trivial though the evidences may be, they are the *one great assurance of a providential universe and of eternal life.*

It is remarkable to contemplate that the theories of materialism have been forcibly impressed on the minds of the cultured and scientific in defiance of this evidence of spirit action so abundant and so universal. At no period of human historical progress have spirit manifestations been entirely absent. The importance of spirit influence in the evolution of the human race has never yet been appreciated by the anthropologist and sociologist. From the messages of warning, counsel, and direction given by excarnate members of barbaric tribes and received by the shaman or medicine man to the loftiest inspirations of genius the scheme of spirit intercourse is continuous, progressive, and unbroken.

Brunton, in his "Religion of Primitive Peoples," says : "I shall tell you of religions so crude as to have no temples or altars, no rites or prayers ; but I can tell you of none that does not teach the belief in the intercommunion of spiritual powers and man." Great explorers who have lived with peoples in the primitive or twilight stages of civilisation can testify to their knowledge of the methods of spirit communion. The medicine man, or witch-doctor, was the psychic or medium of the tribe, set aside from the active work of fighting and hunting, with their periods of gorging, exhaustion, and starvation, because the physical and psychological requirements of his more refined constitution demanded a less strenuous and more temperate mode of life.

At the conclusion of a meeting in Glasgow, I was approached by a seafaring man, who desired to discuss the subject of Spiritualism more fully. Another member, who was a good clairvoyant and trance medium, approached, and was introduced. Immediately he greeted the sailor in a strange dialect, seemingly meaningless gibberish. The sailor drew himself up in amazement, and gazed with great interest at the psychic, who shortly after came out of the condition of partial control. He

vividly described the features, garments, and head-dress of the controlling spirit. The old sea captain and trader said, "I recognise the communicator. He was the chieftain of one of the hill tribes on the Gambia coast of West Africa. I lived among these people for eight years, and he was my staunchest friend." He translated the strange and beautiful message of greeting and attachment he had unexpectedly received, and added information of great interest: "These people claimed that when any member of the tribe died or passed on from the physical state, he was able to come again to them and prove his continued existence. At the first feast of the new moon they sat round the walls in the hut of the deceased man, and they *said* he materialised in their midst. I was often invited to be present at such festivals, but with the insular prejudices of the Britisher I scouted such things, and refused to go. Now, in the light of greater knowledge, I regret deeply I did not take the opportunities of investigating the reality of such occurrences and the truth of such claims."

VALUE OF SPIRIT HELP TO PRIMITIVE PEOPLES.

At the close of an address in the east of Scotland, in which I had criticised the usual prejudiced view that the medicine-man rose to a position of paramount influence in tribal and clan life by superior cunning and unscrupulousness, I received first-hand confirmatory testimony from a lady in the audience. She said, "Before the South African war broke out we owned a large farm in that territory. On one occasion we lost a valuable cow and searched with our native servants in all directions, but without success. Our 'boys,' or black labourers, continually advised us to consult the Kaffir witch-doctor in our extremity. The idea was repugnant to my husband, but at last, when hope of restoration had been abandoned, he turned a blind eye to our proceedings. In company with the natives I took a present to the witch-doctor. His actions seemed then to me strange and revolting—the convulsions of trance-control. At last, turning in a north-westerly direction, he said if we journeyed onward a few miles we would find the cow had fallen down a deep cleft or kloof. It was safe and uninjured, but owing to the steep sides of the cleft was unable to extricate itself. Acting on his advice we pro-

vided ourselves with stout ropes and rescued the animal. But my sceptical husband subsequently never cared to have the subject mentioned in his hearing."

One may readily maintain that had it not been for the guiding influence and communications received from excarnate members of the clans and tribes, primitive peoples would have been exterminated. The psychic, shaman, medicine-man or witch-doctor is thus seen to have been the priest and saviour of his tribe.

THE EVIDENCE OF SPIRIT-PRESENCE ABUNDANT.

Madame D'Esperance, who has travelled and investigated widely, in an interesting lecture in London, said that among simple peoples like the Laplanders spirit manifestations, to us rare and amazing, are treated as every-day occurrences and occasion neither wonder nor surprise.

Recently I was requested to investigate two "haunted" houses. The first was inhabited by a refined and pious lady who had prayed for the "gift of the spirit" at a revivalist meeting. Her prayer was answered, but in ways she did not anticipate. However, as she was a lady of great natural intelligence and keen business training and insight, the task of convincing her that such phenomena as she experienced—movement of objects, raps, sounds, and materialisations—were natural and orderly, and not to be dreaded, was pleasant and easy. Life has taken on to her a richer and deeper meaning, and in her last interview she said, "I should be sorry if these manifestations ceased."

Another case was that of a gentleman who wished to sell his house on account of the disquieting noises and movement of objects heard after the decease of his aged father. The gentleman was dignified, precise, and educated, but had lived a narrowed life of convention and orthodoxy. He related many incidents—loud raps, footsteps on the stairs, chairs overturned, pictures removed from the walls, beds shaken, and hands materialised. All these pointed in one direction, the continued interest and presence of the aged father, who desired to demonstrate his continued guardianship and loving influence. The family seemed to urge, "We buried him in March," and could hardly grasp the distinction between the worn-out bodily tabernacle and

the immortal inhabitant. They were amazed at the coolness and appreciative interest with which I naturally listened to their woe-begone accounts, and resented my comment, "You are lucky! I preside over associations, many members of which would give half they possess to get manifestations so striking, decisive, and convincing." I proposed to hold a seance to get in touch with the manifesting intelligence, but old-time prejudice and conventional fears prevented such being realised.

In a letter requesting me not to arrange such, the gentleman revealed his position and state of mind. Quoting therefrom, "None of us have any desire to hold communication with the unseen world. We only wish to live under the ordinary conditions of common life, and trust in Providence that all will yet be well with us. . . . The idea of holding conversation with the departed, however much we may venerate their memory, is repugnant to us."

What a wealth of revelation and love is shut out by this timid, conservative, and mistaken state of mind. I have great anticipations that this point of view will change.

Sympathetic and careful investigators may obtain abundance of striking evidence at first-hand from their acquaintances. But fear of public ridicule and censure is so powerful a consideration that one has to prove worthy of confidence and respect before the intimate, private, personal experiences are related.

THE NEED OF THE INTERPRETING MIND.

Speaking to a young disciple, an aged Hindoo sage taught, "Young friend, there are things which it is altogether *impossible to express in words*. Could the Lhorwa (a species of mud-fish) understand the language of the eagle? It crawls about at the bottom of its turbid pond, and knows of nothing but water, mud, and worms. If any were to inform it of the existence of another, and totally different world above this pond—a world of air and sunshine, of trees and flowers, a world inhabited by winged creatures with gorgeous plumage—would or could it form a conception of such?

"You can only explain an object in terms which refer to similar objects, and" (he added with peculiar

emphasis) "the world behind the 'curtain' is so utterly unlike the world revealed by our senses that the masters could not describe it if they would."

Last year an Icclander, well-educated and occupying a high social and political position, visited Glasgow to discuss the development of mediumship. How difficult it was for one living in the highly complicated conditions and society of a commercial city to explain clearly to one brought up in a simple pastoral environment. Diagram, simile, figure of speech, and symbol had to be freely employed to suggest the depth of meaning.

What difficulties, therefore, must the communicating spirit experience in accommodating to our more finite understanding and poor modes of earth. We have to meet half way by appreciation, translation, and insight, and ability and success in this depend on the culture, knowledge, character, and development of the recipient.

Let us try to make the meaning clear in an indirect way. A newly-married couple lived on the fourth flat of a Glasgow tenement. With the usual endearments peculiar to such circumstances the young wife waved an affectionate greeting from the window to her husband who passed in the street below to his daily employment. A coal hawker detected the signal, and painfully and laboriously climbed the long flight of stairs. He rang the housebell, and depositing on the mat a bag of those black stones usually called house coals, he, to the young wife's surprise, demanded tenpence. *He had misinterpreted the symbol.*

Let us suppose a *key* be presented in a psychic vision. The man of cupidity exclaims, "Oh! the key of a safe! I am coming into a fortune." The man of ambition, "Oh! the key to the door of exclusive society. I am about to enter higher social circles." The reformer might understand such symbol to suggest the key to the problem of more complete social reorganisation. The student might appreciate it as the key of a situation, indicative of the near solution of a problem in science, industry, or philosophy. The same symbol conveys different meanings, suggests various ideas according to the capability, point of view, insight, and *development of the recipient.*

A SYMBOLICAL PSYCHIC VISION.

During a summer holiday I took advantage of the increased leisure and lessened strain to indulge in a novel form of reading. I studied a few books on "Hindoo Spirituality," but had to confess the task of gathering the full depth of meaning elusive, bewildering, and unsatisfactory. The thoughts and teachings were expressed in peculiar Oriental phrases and turns of speech, there were endless repetitions and reiterations, and some of the fables and comparisons seemed to me either delightfully childish or very subtle and profound.

Nevertheless, even a very practical and materialistic Western mind could detect some rich gems of thought and sublime teachings scattered throughout the volumes, and it was evident that if one had been familiar with Oriental imagery and modes of thought many other beautiful and ennobling conceptions would have impressed themselves.

A week or two after I paid a friendly visit to a psychic of high order. At the close of a congenial conversation he said, "Before you go I feel urged to describe a spirit in your atmosphere, a tall, stately, intellectual Brahmin. He holds up a tassel with golden strands interlaced and intertangled in a disorderly fashion. By his side there appears a British soldier in uniform. Presently he draws his hand up the tassel several times. The confused and interlaced strands are disentangled, they stand upright, and from their ends there rises a beautiful white and glowing radiance. I cannot understand the meaning or application of these symbols. They have reference to you."

After quiet contemplation and concentration the following interpretation occurred to my mind, and was confirmed by the spirit-communicator with a grave bow of approval. "The disorderly tangled strands resemble the Hindoo spiritual writings to a Western mind. The uniformed soldier indicates that owing to our military occupation of India we have never studied Hindoo philosophy on the spiritual planes, and they have not revealed its content to the supercilious and acquisitive Western mind. But competent native teachers and expounders would enable us to see order amid the seemingly confused verbiage, strange symbols, and figures of speech. Lofty, radiant, and aspiring spiritual

truths would be seen to be stored in the Hindoo sacred writings. We Spiritualists are engaged in establishing, proving, and developing the *universal* basis of mediumistic phenomena. The time is nearly ripe for Spiritualists to invite competent teachers from all the world's great religious persuasions to speak on spiritual verities from their point of view. This will bind the nations in the indissoluble bonds of a spiritual brotherhood, and bring harmony and peace on earth."

I do not think this interpretation over-exhausted the symbolical vision. Rather would I say that greater patience and intuitive apprehension would have revealed still more profound and far-reaching meanings and applications.

IMPORTANCE AND VALUE OF SYMBOLISM.

The symbolical picture is not only a most rapid means of conveying thought, but it is highly concise, concentrated, suggestive, and illuminating. Symbolical messages can be adjusted to the degree of intelligence and education possessed by the percipient, and also to his mental condition, and even to his idiosyncrasies.

In the highest sense everything is symbolical—all the phenomena of the external world. Phenomena merely means appearances, not necessarily realities. A phenomenon is that which reveals itself. Philosophy teaches that phenomenal representations do but prefigure, foreshadow, or indicate greater realities behind.

We have previously represented this earth-environment, this mundane scheme of material phenomena, to be a prefigurement or precipitation from a more real and abiding world. Realities can only be partially manifested or indicated to the finite human understanding. Therefore the necessity for employing helpful and appropriate symbols in spiritual communications. *Symbolism is the spirit language.*

Take conventional human speech or language—which is an abridged and conventional form of primitive symbolism. The B of our alphabet was the Beth or rough drawing of a house in the older Chaldaean civilisation, whilst C, or Caph, represented the hollow of the hand. These symbols had a value in portraying the necessities of human life among early peoples. This ancient

Semitic method of communication was developed, extended, and modified by the Phoenicians, who became the great merchants of the old world, with trading colonies along the Mediterranean and commerce in the far East. Nor was it only stuffs and spices which they carried, but they spread arts and thoughts into new regions, and in their hands the clumsy hieroglyphic or picture-writing became the alphabet.

A splendid painting like the "Tower of Brass," by Burne-Jones, conveys many moral truths to a cultured mind. Its lack of gaudy colourings would condemn it in the eyes of a domestic servant. The old-time idols of Hindustan reveal to the trained anthropologist the grateful reverence of Hindoo nature-worshippers, but are tabooed and deprecated by evangelical Christian missionaries. In the education of Japanese children symbols are much employed. At his birthday festival the young lad receives a present on which is engraved the picture of a large-bodied carp laboriously endeavouring to swim up a waterfall. This represents perseverance and courage, and teaches that the prizes of life are not for the sluggard and coward. The carvings of dragons portray the prehistoric monsters which had to be exterminated to make human life on the earth's surface possible and secure. This signifies that evil has to be destroyed or overcome to make life happy and progressive—the evils in the environment of an imperfect social system, and the ever-present evils of debasing inherited tendencies in one's own soul.

Ernest Bozzano, in a masterly essay on "Symbolism and Metaphysical Phenomena," has the following sublime passage: "Art itself is only an exalted form of symbolism created to complete the insufficiency of language. True and great poetry consists in clothing thought with symbolical images capable of transmitting to the reader delicate shades of feeling and aspiration which cannot otherwise be communicated. Similarly the plastic arts, by means of representative symbols, objectify in marble, or on canvas, states of mind or impressions of surroundings which cannot be completely expressed by ordinary verbal language. Finally, music is but the most sublime form of symbolism, translating aspiration and intuition into terms of harmonious vibrations; one is almost

disposed to define music as 'a revelation of states of mind syntonising with supersensible reality.'"

THE FUNCTION OF ART.

We Spiritualists who have been and are privileged to receive glimpses of a higher order of existence—fugitive, fragmentary, and symbolical though they be—know, assuredly, practically, and intimately that we are citizens and partakers of this larger life that interpenetrates the material, earthly, mundane scheme of things. To recognise our relationship with this superphysical or spiritual world is to enjoy the larger hope, the grander existence, to live the full, free, and abundant life.

In the old Persian cosmology embodied in Genesis, when organised life-forms appeared on the earth's surface, the creative fiat was uttered, "Be fruitful and multiply." The chief concern of life, says the biologist, is to multiply, to magnify itself. Mere numerical multiplication of life in itself will not suffice—else the earth would be peopled by lowly organisms—bacteria and lice; the influenza germ and the rabbit. "Life," said Spencer, "must increase not merely in length, but in breadth or intensity."

Every organism, microbe, or man, and going further, let us say angel and archangel also, inherits the necessity to "struggle for life." Each must be master of the environment. The struggle for physical life is sanctioned by Nature, and since righteousness makes for fulness of life, Nature's demand for life is the explanation of the power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness. The spiritual efforts, the struggles for the life of others sanctioned by Nature, since thereby her supreme purpose is served.

Adapting the words of the Nazarene, we may say of Modern Spiritualism—which shows the reality of supersensible influences—that it has come that the human race might have life (true life, spiritual life), and that men might have it more abundantly. And the function of art is spiritual—to transmit and interpret those higher influences which sustain and animate those who have risen beyond the immediate pressure of the brute struggle for the necessities of a physical existence.

THE INCREASING PURPOSE OF EVOLUTION.

As biology has now conclusively shown, life reveals itself in continuous adjustments and rearrangements to harmonise with and respond to the external influences and conditionings operating in the environment. Following from this we may recognise the truth expressed by Myers in a lofty passage of sublime grandeur. "The evolutionary scheme shows a constant widening and deepening perception of an environment infinite in infinite ways. Therefore the faculties which befit the material environment have absolutely no primacy, unless it be of the merely chronological kind, over those faculties which science has often called by-products, because they have no manifest tendency to aid their possessor in the struggle for existence in a material world. The higher gifts of genius—poetry, the plastic arts, music, philosophy, pure mathematics, all of these are precisely as much in the central stream of evolution—are perceptions of new truth and powers of new action just as decisively predestined for the race of man as the aboriginal Australian's faculty for throwing a boomerang or for swarming up a tree for grubs. There is, then, about these loftier interests nothing exotic, nothing accidental; they are an intrinsic part of the ever-evolving response to our surroundings which forms not only the planetary but the cosmic history of all our race.

What inconsistencies, what absurdities underlie that assumption that evolution means nothing more than the survival of animals fittest to conquer enemies and to overrun the earth. *On that bare hypothesis the genus homo is impossible to explain.* Ought we not rather to ask of the best specimens of our race what it is they live for? Whether they labour for the meat that perished or for Love and Wisdom? So more and more among mankind the need of food is supplied with as little conscious effort as the need of air; yet these are often the very men through whom evolution is going on most unmistakably, who are becoming the typical figures of the swiftly-changing race."

THE WORLD OF SPIRITUAL JOYS.

In the hours of healthiest sleep, of undisturbed contemplation, and of psychic exaltation the poet, the artist, the genius, and the seer experiences that ecstasy familiar

to those who enter the inner sanctuary and receive the revelations of that wandering vision which is not confined to this earth or this material world alone, but which introduces the seer into the spiritual world and among communities higher than any this planet knows.

HARMONIOUS LIVING.

To attain a full, harmonious, and rounded existence we should combine the tendencies and practices of the contemplative Orientals with the restless energy and creative power of Western peoples. Excesses in either direction should be avoided.

At the present time many hybrid and artificial methods of securing magical or superhuman power are advertised and propounded—gazing at a spot on a wall, repeating incantations, and so on. These vaunted schemes tempt ambitious individuals of weak character who fondly imagine they may thus enter the ranks of super-men and super-women, as Bernard Shaw would remark.

During years of labour and experience in the psychical movement I have met many such would-be superior persons. The extravagance and absurdity of their claims, their silly mannerisms, and their lack of true dignity arouse in the critical, self-contained observer derisive amusement, pity, and contempt. Such unbalanced cranks and manifest hypocrites arouse disgust and suspicion in the minds of investigators and enquirers. In no realm is unassuming modesty and caution so much required as in the advocacy, study, and propaganda of Modern Spiritualism. When these undesirables break down in health they are prolific in excuses—"I entered bad conditions," "I was obsessed by an evil spirit," etc., etc.

No, the only true roads to the attainment of great spiritual power are clean, healthy living, hard work, and noble service in the cause of humanity. By these golden pathways alone may one enjoy the inflowing of spiritual power. The widow's cruse of oil points the moral—the more one gives nobly and lovingly, the more they receive.

WHAT IS AN ADEPT?

The true adepts it is difficult for Europeans and Americans to understand. They look upon the brief

span of life which separates us from eternity with altogether different eyes, and their contempt of wealth is only equalled by their pity for those who are incessantly engaged in its pursuit.

EUROPEAN OPINIONS.

Nor do these true magicians suffer from inhibited or warped instincts. Professor Loeb expresses English-speaking prejudice: "Human happiness is based upon the possibility of a natural and harmonious satisfaction of the instincts. It is rather remarkable that we should still be under the influence of an ethics which considers the human instincts in themselves low and their gratification vicious. That such an ethics must have had a comforting effect upon the Orientals, whose instincts were inhibited or warped through the combined effects of an enervating climate, despotism, and miserable economic conditions, is intelligible, and it is perhaps due to a continuation of the unsatisfactory economic conditions that this ethics still prevails to some extent."

Whilst admitting that there is much truth in the foregoing, Spiritualists would say that the true adept is one who *has chosen the better part*. Contrast him with the feverish, acquisitive Anglo-Saxon, passing ceaselessly from excitement to excitement, from conquest to conquest, accumulating wealth, and in the process of gaining the whole material world starving the immortal soul.

WESTERN CIVILISATION CONDEMNED.

Listen to the awful words of condemnation uttered by an Eastern sage to Dr. Heinrich Hensoldt: "We Hindus are a race immeasurably older in mental culture than the one from which you have sprung; your so-called civilisation is but of yesterday, and you are merely engaged in an eternal process of multiplying your wants. You have abnormally developed and stimulated the accumulative instinct, so that you have actually come to look upon life as a mere opportunity of piling up rubbish, in the shape of so-called material possessions. What, otherwise, can be the meaning of your saying that 'Time is money,' which would be apt to amuse us if it were not for the saddening thought which underlies it. I say again that what you call your glorious civilisation is, and has been, nothing but a process of multiplying your

wants—the luxuries of to-day are the necessities of to-morrow—and the more the horizon of these wants extends, the more you will have to toil in order to gratify them; you are forced to devote an ever-increasing part of your life to the procuring of the means wherewith to gratify artificial wants, for each new want implies a new sorrow, viz., the sorrow experienced in the deprivation of the means to gratify it. A thousand wants means a thousand sorrows, a thousand disappointments, a thousand pains. Has the standard of happiness been raised even to the extent of one inch by your much-vaunted civilisation? I say no; on the contrary, you suffer more than your forefathers did at any given period, because they lived in a simpler and more frugal manner, and their wants were fewer. They had more time to rest and think. The multiplicity of your wants has brought about a feverish activity, and in your so-called ‘struggle for existence’ you have actually come to look upon your fellow-man in the light of an enemy. You try to overcome him by stealth and by every modification of craft; you try to unhouse him from business and drive him to the wall. This is what you complacently call ‘the survival of the fittest,’ a kind of password which you have invented in order to appease your not-over-delicate conscience. Eight hundred years ago there was club-law in Frankistan: your rival or competitor would simply dash your brains out and take possession of your property, and there was an end of you and your sorrows. You do not fight with clubs any longer, but you wage a more merciless warfare with your brains; to-day, it is brain against brain that is pitted in relentless and implacable combat, and your suffering is more of a mental than physical character. Physical suffering is limited in duration, but mental suffering is the worst kind of agony. You see the carnage around you, the furious struggle for possession at the expense of your fellow-man, and you actually seem to enjoy your miserable triumph; you chuckle at the thought of having overreached your neighbour in cunning; of having ruined him in business; of having brought him to his knees. You little think of his grief and sorrow, and of the fate of those who are depending upon him; of the heart-break involved in his agony on realising that another hope has been frustrated,

another illusion dispelled, another dream of happiness shattered for ever, and another load added to this world's burden of sorrow. Survival of the fittest, forsooth! Who is it that survives in your precious struggle for existence? Is it the most humane, the most sensitive, the most generous, the most altruistic? No; it is the most merciless, the most selfish, the most unscrupulous—the very type whose complete extinction would be eminently desirable in the interests of the race. We Hindus, on the other hand, after having risen to a certain height of material culture, have paused and reflected, and have begun to reduce our wants to a minimum. All our immediate wants, if translated into time, would mean less than twenty minutes' work per day; we can devote all the remainder of our time to mental culture; to thinking—not to book study, but to the solution of the world-mystery. And we *have* done a good deal of thinking, as you are prepared to admit. We have developed, during the last fifty centuries, mind-faculties which are a source of constant surprise to you; in fact, while you have been working for the stomach, we have been working for the brain. You Westerners, in fact, are all stomach, and we are all brain."

In these times of the fever of industrialism, the strenuous days of the competitive system, let the terrible denunciations serve as salutary warnings. Let us not be mole-eyed, blinded by materiality to the real purpose of existence.

THE IDEAL STRONG MAN.

Cromwell, who did so much to secure for after generations those large measures of religious and political liberty we enjoy to-day, may be considered an ideal type. He was not only a man of tremendous physical strength and energy, but was a marvellous sensitive. It is recorded that on one occasion a spirit-guide, a woman of commanding presence, appeared at the bed-curtains and proclaimed his future rise and influence. In critical times of great moment and national importance he withdrew to solitudes for contemplation and communion. The brilliant character sketch of Lord Rosebery is unsurpassed: "*Cromwell was a practical mystic—the most terrible and formidable of all combinations. His inspiration was apparently derived, in my judgment*

really derived, from close communion with the supernal and the celestial. A man possessing such inspiration, and uniting it with the energy of a mighty man of action, lives on a Sinai of his own, and when he chooses to come down to this world below seems armed no less than with the terrors and decrees of the Almighty himself."

Thus is the secret of the strength of great men revealed, and the possibilities which lie before all are clearly indicated.

MAN AND THE UNIVERSE.

Spiritualism changes from top to bottom man's ideas about the value, meaning, and purpose of life. Therefore it has been necessary to meet the needs of investigators by dwelling on the difficulties of the new standpoint, and emphasising the most important aspects of the newer realm of thought and outlook.

A general philosophic survey has been taken. *Philosophy is based on facts*, and the function or office of philosophy is to harmonise facts, to show them in their right relationships, and so to enable us to gain truer and higher conceptions of life, the nature of man, and of the universe.

Previously it has been maintained that we are not something separate from the universe, but *a part of it*. *Religion—the highest binding principle—is a reality permeating the whole of life*. The highest state of living—perfect freedom—consists in co-operation with the divine, conscious unison with the entire scheme of existence.

This enables us to understand that the most profound problems of philosophy, the deepest questions of the human soul, are the

WHENCE, WHY, AND WHITHER OF CREATION,
which may be variously expressed in the words:

Whence does life spring? What is life? Why am I inhabiting the earth-body? Whither do I go when the earth-existence comes to an end? What destiny awaits me?

In times of contemplation, in moments of reverie, in periods of abstraction from material surroundings, these great soul-questions arise and demand solution. And according to the extent of the knowledge at command, the patience and perseverance exercised, and the clear-

ness of insight manifested, so will the answers be truer and more complete.

The central point of the inquiry, the key of the whole philosophic situation lies in solving the main mystery, *What is life?* and in the first instance an appeal will have to be made to

SCIENCE, THE HANDMAID OF PHILOSOPHY.

Many brilliant investigators have detected harmonies and relationships amidst the phenomena of our material world, and have tried to co-ordinate and unify their ideas about these in an inclusive system of monistic philosophy. Some have taken the *near-sighted view*, and have been imprisoned in the limitations of the materialist position. Others, recognising the imperfections and limitations of philosophic materialism, rise to the loftier, more majestic platform of *idealism or Spiritualism*.

Even Professor Tyndall, who in the popular mind was a materialist of materialists, confessed in the amended Belfast address, "I have noticed during years of self-observation that it is not in hours of clearness and vigour that this doctrine (material atheism) commends itself to my mind ; that in the presence of stronger and healthier thought it ever dissolves and disappears, as *offering no solution of the mystery* in which we dwell and of which we form a part."

MISTAKE OF MATERIALISM.

"If," said a great thinker, "fanaticism has made a tragedy of religion, *materialism has made a farce of philosophy*." The materialist usually fails to distinguish clearly between what is *temporary*, or evanescent, and what is *permanent*, or enduring. When common interests influence the members of a community a crowd assembles. Later, when the incident terminates, the crowd disperses, but the instinctive feeling of human solidarity, which found expression in the assembling of the crowd, endures. A cloud forms in the sky, and soon once more the sky is blue again ; the cloud has died. Dew forms on a leaf, a little while and it has gone again.

"But we know better. In an imperceptible form it was, and soon into an imperceptible form it will again have passed, but meanwhile there is the dewdrop glistening in the sun, reflecting all the movements of the neigh-

bouring world and contributing its little share to the beauty and serviceableness of creation.

"Its imperceptible or incarnate existence is temporary. As a drop it was born, and as a drop it dies; but as aqueous vapour it persists, an intrinsically imperishable natural substance. Even it, therefore, has the attribute of immortality. So, then, what about life? Can that be a nonentity which has built up particles of carbon, and hydrogen, and oxygen into the form of an oak, or an eagle, or a man?"

No one can survey the world around, calmly and seriously reflecting upon the multiform changes going on around us in the material world—the precise disintegrations of chemical substances, the orderly formation of crystals, the growth of plants, the movements of animals—and contemplate the phenomena manifested in the mighty and intricate human organism, without intuitively concluding that behind all material changes there must lie some tremendous power which, whether we can ever know its real or essential nature or not, is clearly not to be expressed in terms of chemical atoms, atomic groupings, or any combination into which it is possible for them to enter.

Said an illuminated writer forty years ags, "The moment we arrive at this stage of thought, we perceive how hollow are those assertions of the superiority of matter—how vain those endeavours to disprove the existence of mind—over which so many have wasted their lives, hopelessly forswearing the very intellect which, by its partial views, led them into a complexity of errors. Before this fact the very earth passes into the condition of a shadow, and beyond the almost intangible forms of material existence lies a thought more solid than the adamant, a thought which operates silently, and finds utterance and representation in that world of change which lives only to embody the idea of permanence. The flower, the tree, the cloud, the sunbeam, the granite rock, have no existence but as *letters in the alphabet of nature*. As letters in an alphabet, they are woven and interwoven into syllables and words, and, as letters of an alphabet, again displaced to enter into new combinations. As letters of an alphabet they exist also, not for themselves, but as *elements through which intelligence is spelt into expression*.

and thought fashioned into visible form. What is the flower but an assemblage of tissue, which is again but an assemblage of gases? That same water, air, electricity, and ammonia fall in a shower, and are each absorbed by the plant; and tomorrow the very same elements which appeared in the heavens, like a golden car for the sun, or a group of cherubim winging upward through the ether, are seen in the form of a lowly violet, lending softness to its purple tint, freshness to its grateful odour, and healthy greenness to its heart-shaped leaves."

"All, all evanescent and changing. Stability there is and must be, but it is only to be found in the everlasting power which lies behind material changes, and in the Almighty wisdom which guides them through their varied career. The so-called laws of nature are manifestations of divine reason and operations of eternal love. The universe is as certainly under the control and direction of mind, as are the movements of the human body subject to the operations of the human will."

VIEWS OF THE GREAT SYNTHETIC PHILOSOPHER.

Dr. Alfred Russell Wallace, in his autobiography, relates that after their return from the Amazon valley his fellow-naturalist Bates and he called by appointment on Herbert Spencer. Their minds were full of the unsolved problem of the origin of life, and they looked to Spencer as the one man living to throw light on that question of questions. His marvellous generalising mind which could trace the adjustments and relationships existing throughout all nature rendered him capable, above all his fellows, of dealing with an enquiry of such depth and import.

But when they ventured upon such a subject and asked whether he had arrived at even one of the first steps towards its solution, their hopes were dashed at once. That, said Spencer, was *too vast a problem* to solve with the knowledge at command, and so it was their present duty to wait and work contentedly at minor problems.

"And," adds Dr. Wallace, "though Spencer, and Darwin, and Weismann have thrown floods of light on the *phenomena of life* (the organic machinery of life's expression), its *essential nature and origin* remain in as great obscurity as ever. Whatever light we do possess comes from a source (Modern Spiritualism or Psychical

Research) which these scientists and philosophers either neglected or ignored."

THE TESTIMONY OF SCIENCE.

The problem of the origin of life has bulked largely in the history of biology. In his masterly survey of biological progress the clear and cautious thinker Professor J. A. Thomson thus sums up: "If it were the object of this treatise to give a statement of the established facts of biology, our discussion of the origin of life might be condensed into a single sentence: We do not *know* anything in regard to the origin of life. The only certainty is a negative one—there is no established case in which living organisms have arisen apart from parent organisms of the same kind."

Speculation, which runs in advance of established facts is certainly allowable and, at times, of great service as long as it is distinctly valued as such and understood to be merely speculation, and not forcibly and dogmatically given out as ascertainable and established knowledge.

In his presidential address to the British Association in 1870 Huxley declared his *conviction* that the fact of biogenesis, that life arises from pre-existing life was thoroughly established. At the same time he expressed his *opinion* that if he could have been a witness of the beginning of organic evolution he would have seen the origin of protoplasm from not-living matter.

As the biologist maintains: Since our data are practically nil, the scientific attitude in regard to the problem of the origin of life upon the earth must be agnostic. Yet many opinions on the subject have been ventured, and some of them are both interesting and stimulating.

In 1865. Richter expounded his hypothesis that living germs might be eternal, and that they might drift through space from sphere to sphere, lodging and developing where the conditions were favourable. Helmholtz lent his authority to this hypothesis.

But the best-known name in this connection is that of the distinguished physicist, Lord Kelvin. By way of an elaborate joke, it is often maintained he propounded the theory that life was borne to the earth by meteorites. This would, so to speak, shift the responsibility of the problem off the earth, leaving the solution elsewhere.

The opinion towards which the majority seemed to swing round at the close of the nineteenth century is that expressed by Hæckel in 1866, that analogy points to an erstwhile origin of living matter from not-living matter.

Quite different from the others is that of Alfred Russel Wallace, who postulates a spiritual influx at the origin of life and in connection with some other great events of history.

To those who study the developments of scientific and philosophical thought, it would seem that we are in sight of a loftier and all-embracing monistic philosophy which shall include the lower or de-graded philosophic speculations of Hæckel and the views and standpoints of idealists and Spiritualists.

Perhaps a *symbolical psychic vision* recently received is appropriate in this connection. The psychic described an old hermit alchemist with rough mien and matted hair gazing at some chemical compound he was preparing in a rude furnace constructed in his cave of refuge. From the glowing mass arose red and brownish fumes, which made his expression of countenance savage and forbidding.

Gradually these seemed to clear away, and taking a white shining metal like quicksilver, he poured it into the glowing compound. The fumes vanished, and above the furnace was a clear and beautiful yellow band of light. The dirty, forbidding, dishevelled alchemist seemed also transformed, and, in addition to wearing more beautiful garments, his face was illuminated by wisdom and beauty.

How are we to interpret and apply these symbols?

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE VISION.

The vision of the old alchemist experimenter might well represent the history of discovery. "Man! know thyself," advised the ancient Grecian founder of science and philosophy, and a *fuller knowledge of the constitution of man* is the starting point of future intellectual, moral, social, and religious advancement.

Man is a singular admixture of the bestial and the divine. The early scientists of the middle ages who sought in material chemical combinations and transmutations the secret of the "philosopher's stone," studied man from the material or animal side. Represented by the red and brownish fumes—the passions, animal desires, ignoble thoughts, and low ideals made him seem a de-

praved creature, calculated to produce sadness, disgust, anger, and resentment in the mind of the investigator.

But the pure, white, spiritual light showed he was *divine*, and held within untold and incalculable possibilities of development and lofty advancement. Viewed in this light, even the most depraved of earth's creatures are subject to nature's law of unceasing progress, and the student of human nature is filled with hope and joy.

The bright yellow band symbolised the pure and true conceptions of man's constitution which are attained when these two factors—the material and the spiritual—are taken into account.

THE UNITY IN NATURE.

Our knowledge of the *conditions* in which life is manifested must *not* be taken to imply a knowledge of the *nature* of life.

From a loftier monistic standpoint than science and philosophy has yet attained the lifeless and the living worlds—the inorganic and organic—are *continuous*. Nature is a “flawless unit of fact,” and the Whole of Things is indeed a whole and not a patchwork or a heterogeneous heap. Arising from this consideration is the question of the

RELATIONSHIP OF LIFE AND MATTER.

Vital activity implies an *exchanging of energy* between the living creature and its surroundings, interaction between the organism and its environment. The most general problems of biology—the science of physical life—have to do with this relation.

In ancient times, before the advancement of chemistry and physics made the analysis of bodily functions possible, the *contrast* between the living and the not-living, the organic and inorganic, was made little of, and the *relationship of dependence* in which an organism stands to its environment was not perceived. Naturally the *doctrine of the spontaneous generation* of even highly-organised animals met with general acceptance.

From Aristotle to Augustine, from Lucretius to Luther, the belief in spontaneous generation remained unshaken. The ancient botanist, Cesalpino, believed that frogs might be generated from mud by the influence of sunshine. He suggested a similar origin of aboriginal Americans. An

Italian chemist of the Middle Ages improved upon this by giving a recipe for creating mice.

Priestley discovered *oxygen*, which supports combustion in nature. Mayow compared living to slow combustion, and it was now increasingly recognised that an essential step in cell-changes and cell-work (metabolism) is the oxidation or burning up of carbon compounds. Thus the organism was seen to be in part dependent on its surroundings. The establishment of the doctrine of the *conservation of energy* brought about the realisation of the organism's complete dependence upon its environment for the sustenance of its physical life.

These discoveries in chemistry and physics, and the experiments of Redi (1626-97) and Spallanzani (1729-99), up to Tyndall and Pasteur of modern days, contributed to the growing disbelief in spontaneous generation.

RISE OF BACTERIOLOGY, OR THE SCIENCE OF GERM-LIFE.

Francisco Redi was distinguished alike as scholar, poet, physician, and naturalist. His few simple experiments did much to shatter the dogma of spontaneous generation and to establish the conclusion of *biogenesis* (*omne vivum e vivo*—all life arises from pre-existing life).

Redi covered a jar with wire gauze, in which he placed the flesh of a dead animal. Thus guarded from intruding insects, he showed that no grubs or insects developed in it. So the maggots present in putrid meat did not arise *de novo*. A simple discovery, but one of profound importance.

But Redi's experiments were held to controvert the Scriptures, and we find the Scotch priest Turbervill Needham (1750) trying hard to give experimental proof of the spontaneous origin of wheat-eels. He boiled infusions for several minutes in flasks, which were then hermetically sealed, and found that organisms rapidly developed in the contents. He concluded, therefore, that the germs originated spontaneously in the lifeless constituents of the liquid. But we should now say this result was due to *imperfect sterilisation* and *imperfect corking* of the tubes.

The Abbé Spallanzani (1729-1799), an Italian divine, criticised Needham's researches. He showed that even minute forms of life did not develop in decoctions which had been well boiled and hermetically closed up. Needham objected that Spallanzani, by the excessive heat

which he employed, had so altered the air in the vessels that it was no longer suitable for the development of life.

Schultze, Schwann, and Schröder completed the advance. They carefully boiled the infusions and supplied air which had been passed through red-hot tubes, sulphuric acid, or cotton wool. In neither case did living germs appear in the infusions. The air completely lost the power of decomposition. These experiments certainly suggested that there was something in the air capable of giving rise to organised beings.

But error dies hard. In 1859 Pouchet appeared as an advocate of spontaneous generation, and provoked Pasteur to some of his famous experiments. Pasteur threw light on the subject by his study of the organised particles—many of them living or dead germs, bacilli, or bacteria—which float in the air. He opened twenty sealed flasks, containing organic infusions (beef-broth, jelly, etc.) in the pure air of the Mer de Glace. Only one thereafter showed signs of life; but eight out of twenty opened on the plains, and all of the twenty opened in towns developed germs.

He boiled liquid jelly in a flask, the neck of which was drawn out in the form of an “S,” and then left it for some time. The fluid did not decompose, although it was in contact with the external air, because the dust was arrested in the bend of the tube. But if the vessel were violently shaken the dust was dislodged, and, entering the fluid, rapidly brought about its decomposition. “And therefore,” exclaimed Pasteur in the course of his memorable address, “I could point to that liquid and say to you I have taken my drop from the immensity of creation, and I have taken it full of the elements appropriated to the development of inferior beings. And I wait, I watch, I question it, begging it to recommence for me the beautiful spectacle of the first creation. But it is dumb—dumb since these experiments were begun, several years ago; it is dumb because I have kept it from the only thing man cannot produce—from the germs which float in the air, from life, for life is a germ and a germ is life. Never will the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow of this simple experiment.”

Pasteur was somewhat premature, as decomposition still occurred even with careful precautions. This was

found to be due to the presence of "spores," or seeds, and, with the discovery of these resistant forms, the doctrine of spontaneous generation received its final death-blow. The spores of the anthrax bacillus, for example, having thick cell walls, are able to survive boiling. Tyndall demonstrated that to secure absolute sterility in infusions it is safer to have an intermittent application of heat. What a single boiling may not ensure, since the spores of some bacteria are much more resistant than the full-grown cells, is certainly effected by subjection to high temperature on three consecutive days.

In concluding his experiments, Tyndall said, with justifiable confidence: "There seems no flaw in this reasoning; and it is so simple, as to render it unlikely that the notion of bacterial life developed from dead dust can ever gain currency among the members of a great scientific profession."

Thus we see that, at present, experimental biology and bacteriology leads us to a

BLIND ALLEY REGARDING THE ORIGIN OF LIFE-FORMS.

But we must *avoid finality and dogmatism*. Ferments, which may be said to occupy an intermediate position between the lifeless proteids and the living cells, may be rendered less active by heat and rejuvenated by suitable treatment.

Prof. Bose, of Calcutta, treated iron, plant tissue, and nerves with chloroform and stimulants, and observed the similarities of their electrical pulses of response to stimuli.

Prof. Loeb, by his ingenious experiments on beating hearts, hatching eggs, and truncated jelly-fish, has shown us the importance of bio-chemistry. Everything slowly tends to *obliterate the line of demarcation* between the organic and inorganic, the living and the non-living.

Life's expression varies. An old philosopher said: "In the mineral, life sleeps; in the vegetable it grows; in the animal it grows and moves; and in the man it grows, moves, feels, and wakes to self-realisation." Nature is a unity.

The conclusion which most modern biologists accept is, that while there is no known evidence of not-living (inorganic) matter giving origin to living organisms, this does not necessarily exclude (a) the possibility that this one took place, (b) the possibility that it is taking place

now, or (c) the possibility that it may be made to take place again.

And "if any of these possibilities should express realities, then our estimate of the potentialities of not-living matter must be heightened."

One Reality manifests through all.

To assist the non-technical reader to follow the argument, it will be necessary to present a simple pictorial representation of

THE CONSTITUTION OF MATTER.

Let us imagine a rain-drop about the size of a pea magnified to the size of the earth. It would then be seen that it was not one uniform, continuous (homogeneous) piece of matter, but that the drop was composed of countless millions of small bodies in ceaseless motion. These small bodies are called *molecules*. On this scale they would be larger than coarse shot, but not so large as cricket balls. That which moves the molecules is called *energy*. (Heat is a form of energy.)

Add to the amount of energy by heating the water. The molecules now move through greater paths, and the water expands. When the water occupies 1,700 times as much space the liquid is converted into the vapour form (steam).

Rob the liquid drop of energy by cooling. The molecules, instead of moving in circular orbits rolling or gliding around each other, move through shorter paths, oscillating from side to side like the pendulum of a clock. The liquid (water) is then converted into the solid form (ice). This illustrates simply the *molecular constitution of matter*.

Matter consists of countless molecules moved by energy. Potential energy (*e.g.*, a stone at rest) is energy of position. Kinetic energy (*e.g.*, a moving stone) is energy of motion.

But now give these molecules of water to a *chemist*. By intense heat or the employment of metals, like potassium or sodium, or other chemical processes, the chemist could tear or sub-divide the molecules into *atoms*. Thus a molecule of water could be separated into two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen. Water is written down by chemists H_2O .

Within the past nine years there has been developed the
ELECTRIC THEORY OF MATTER.

When the chemical atoms are placed in an exhausted tube (a vacuum bulb from which the air has been extracted), a high voltage (a powerful current) of electricity is passed through and the atoms are torn into their constituent ultimate particles, called *corpuscles* or *electrons*—because each infinitesimal piece of matter carries a charge of electricity. The atom of hydrogen is composed of about 700 negative electrons or corpuscles moving with a speed of more than 50,000 miles per second. What tremendous electric and etheric energies are locked up in matter! It has been calculated that in a very small amount of material (a few grammes of radium) we have sufficient energy to raise the whole of the British navy to the height of Ben Nevis!

If the rapidly-moving corpuscle were represented by a full stop or period on a printed page, the atom would be represented by a space equivalent to the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral.

In water (H_2O) the hydrogen atom—the lightest of atoms—has 700 corpuscles. Oxygen has 11,200. Hence hydrogen can more readily take up free corpuscles outside the atomic system. Hydrogen has therefore the positive charge of electricity, oxygen the negative. *Electrical changes thus lie at the basis of chemical actions.*

Thus constituting the masses of material substances we have the infra-worlds of molecules, atoms, and electrons, with the tremendous energies locked up therein.

PURPOSE OF HUMAN BODY.

Experimental physiology has demonstrated the value of food in the life work of the human organism. A large metal vessel containing a supply of oxygen gas has placed in it a measured quantity of oats. The whole vessel is immersed in water. The oats are fired by electric means, and the heat or energy given off warms the surrounding water. The amount of heat or energy given off can thus be directly and accurately determined. (Calorimeter).

The same amount of oats is given to an animal. A machine similar in nature, but of course more elaborate in construction, is employed, and the heat or energy

given off by the animal's body is accurately measured. The heat given out during the chemical changes in digestion, and the combustion, burning, or oxidation of the food-stuffs is found to be exactly equal to that given out when the oats are burned in the oxygen of the metal vessel (the calorimeter).

From such experiments we conclude that energy is neither created nor destroyed in the body. All the energy (heat) which is given out by the body comes from without, namely, from the food, by its union with the oxygen of the atmosphere. The energy of the food is utilised for the various functions of the body, such as the production of movement and work, as well as of heat, electrical changes, movements of fluid, etc., in the body.

Said Prof. F. J. Allen: "The most prominent, and perhaps the most fundamental, phenomenon of life is what may be described as the Energy Traffic, or the function of *trading in energy*. The chief physical function of living matter seems to consist in absorbing energy, storing it in a higher potential state, and afterwards partially expending it in the kinetic or active form."

The human body, therefore, is a marvellous machine or engine in which a store of energy, molecular, chemical, and electric is developed, generated, or collected to be adapted and transformed for the performance of the functions of life.

Life, then, is associated with rapid chemical changes in complex molecules, and is characterised by the powers or faculties of assimilation, growth, and reproduction.

THE CHEMISTRY OF THE HUMAN BODY

is elusive and complicated, but hints of the chemistry of vital processes are available.

All living tissue, plant and animal, is built up from *protoplasm*—the physical basis of life. If we examine a drop of stagnant water under the microscope, we find, amongst other micro-organisms, little microscopic lumps of moving jelly, which are known as *amœbæ*. These can be seen to move about spontaneously, to eat up little food particles, to excrete or turn out of their bodies the indigestible portions of the foods, and, finally, to grow, and at a certain stage in their history to divide and produce a new generation of *amœbæ*. In the centre of the lump of jelly is a rounded body which is known as a

nucleus, and the whole animal is spoken of as a cell. A cell is thus a little mass of living material which is called protoplasm, containing in its centre a specialised portion known as the nucleus.

This unicellular animal, the amæba, represents the simplest form of organic life. This tiny animal exhibits the processes of digestion, metabolism, excretion, and reaction to stimuli, every reaction being adapted to the preservation of the animal from injury.

Protoplasm consists of simple elements like carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, with traces of sulphur and phosphorus. We might say chiefly of carbon and water. Now carbon and water from the chemico-electric point of view are remarkable substances.

The molecules of carbon and water build themselves up into a complex aggregate by attaching themselves to each other by their residual or outstanding affinities. Thus they may by the influence of their massiveness tear asunder any salts or other simple chemical substances dissolved in them. Water and carbon have wonderful powers of promoting and forming chemical actions and combinations. Nitrogen, sulphur, and phosphorus exist in unstable chemical (and electric) equilibrium also. Thus the human bodily tissues readily react and adjust themselves, by rapid chemical changes, to the varying impulses and stimuli of the environment.

BY INCARNATION OR INHABITING THE BODY

we may adjust ourselves to or come into relationship with the material environment of earth-life. But we cannot explain life in terms of chemical action or material energies. The chemical actions may accompany the manifestation of life, but we must not confuse life itself with the machinery of its expression. The life-principle (spirit) may use the body for functioning on this mundane plane, but is otherwise independent of it. When by accident, disease, or slow decay of tissue the organism is rendered unsuitable for us to inhabit, we are not knocked out of existence, but merely transferred to other surroundings—the super-physical, meta-etherial, environment or spiritual world of existence.

Similarly the brain does not produce mind. The mind makes use of the brain. The brain transmits a limited expression of mind, but does not produce mind.

WHAT DOES THE BRAIN PRODUCE ?

Vital processes depend upon fermentations. In thinking, fermentative products result, such as carbonic acid gas and alcohol (the complicated chloresterin). Perhaps phosphorus in brain tissue is consumed or oxidised, phosphorus pentoxide being formed. When the brain works we have the production of substances like chloresterin, carbonic acid gas, creatin, and phosphorus pentoxide.

But who would be so illogical as to say that thought originated in or was composed of these substances, or could be expressed in terms of chemical action? No, we are compelled to the conclusion that mind pertains to a higher category of things, and the brain is the marvellous mechanism employed by mind for its earthly expression. Similarly also regarding the body we say that a highly complex molecular aggregate is capable of being the vehicle or material basis of life; but to the enquiry what life is no answer has yet been given.

According to one biologist there is no such thing as living matter. The meaning of this, which may seem paradoxical, is simply that vital function may depend upon the inter-actions or inter-relations of a number of complex substances, none of which could by itself be called alive. Just as a secret of a firm's success may depend upon a particularly fortunate association of partners, so it may be with vitality.

There must exist some animating and co-ordinating principle presiding over cell metabolism to bring the multifarious processes of the body into harmony.

LIFE IS A DIRECTIVE FORCE.

Life is a guiding principle, a controlling agency. Life is neither matter nor energy, nor even a function of matter or of energy, but is something belonging to a different category.

Matter possesses energy in the form of persistent motion, and it is propelled by force; but neither matter nor energy possesses the power of automatic guidance and control. Energy has no directing power. Let us make clear

LIFE'S FUNCTION OF DIRECTIVITY.

In the town's reservoir is a large volume of water. Associated with the moving molecules of water is a vast

store of energy. A pipe or channel is connected with the reservoir and the induced flow of water directed to subserve some preconceived purpose. The energies of the water may be guided or controlled to irrigate agricultural land, increasing its fertility and contributing to communal prosperity; to flush a drain and remove putrefying matter, and so fostering the health of a community; to turn a water-wheel to which machinery is connected, thus subserving industrial purposes; or to flood a populated city, creating havoc and suffering around.

By the placing or disposition of the pipe we did not add to, nor subtract from, the amount of energy available, but we introduced the element of guidance, direction, or control.

The spirit or life-principle is that which governs, directs, or controls the energies of the organism during earth-life. This being admitted, certain things logically follow which facts verify.

If the spirit is the controlling principle, and by physical death the spirit be transferred to a spiritual world, then it should be possible for the spirit-intelligence or spirit-entity to come back to the mundane condition and control more or less completely the partially-vacated organism of one still living the earth-life. This we know is realised in the phenomena of trance-possession and impersonation. Personally, the most convincing proofs of spirit-persistence and identity have come to me in this way. Like many Spiritualists I have seen the features of an "impersonating" medium transfigured, and before me observed the familiar features and mannerisms of the ones I have known and loved. They have spoken the old words of endearment, related incidents of our past earth-friendship, and given information concerning current events which I had subsequently to verify, and the importance of which only they and I understood.

The critical enquirer might say that if the spirit be freed from the trammels of the flesh, the prison-house of the body, the limitations of earth, then the power of manipulating material energies should be extended and intensified. Quite true, and the marvellous physical phenomena of mediumship prove the truth of this assumption—the fragrant liquid perfumes manufactured

from the exuding perspiration, the beautiful lamps resembling the diffused phosphorescence of substances immersed in liquid air, the levitation of objects contrary to gravitational force, the materialisation of physical forms by the concentration of auric psychoplasm and partial disintegration of the body of the medium.

These are natural phenomena, produced, the spirits claim, by their superior acquaintanceship with the workings of natural law.

In the majestic words of Lodge, we say: "Life is something outside the scheme of mechanics: outside the categories of matter and energy, though it can nevertheless control or direct material forces, timing them and determining their place of application, subject always to the laws of energy and all other mechanical laws: supplementing or accompanying these laws, therefore, but contradicting or traversing them no whit.

"Life may be something not only ultra-terrestrial, but even immaterial: something outside our present categories of matter and energy: as real as they are, but different, and utilising them for its own purpose. What is certain is that life possesses the power of vitalising the complex material aggregates which exist on this planet, and of utilising their energies for a time to display itself amid terrestrial surroundings; and then it seems to disappear or evaporate whence it came. . . . There are others who recognise in this extraordinary development a contact between this material frame of things and a universe higher and other than anything known to our senses: a universe not dominated by physics and chemistry, but utilising the interactions of matter for its own purposes: a universe where the human spirit is more at home than it is among these temporary collocations of atoms: a universe capable of infinite development, of noble contemplation, and of lofty joy, long after this planet—nay, the whole solar system—shall have fulfilled its present spire of destiny, and retired cold and lifeless upon its endless way."

To such a noble breadth, majestic calm, and lofty outlook do the revelations of Spiritualism point, confirming the deepest intuitions of the human heart.

Said Myers in reviewing the conscious world, "Life comes we know not whence; it vanishes we know not

whither; it is interlocked with a moving system vaster than that we know. To grasp the *whole* of its manifestations we should have to follow it into an unseen world." A *partial manifestation* of life through the human organism—the imperfect machinery of earth—we may observe, but of the *nature* of *life* itself we must remain ignorant. As here on this mundane plane we function through the fleshly organism—appropriate physio-chemically to the material environment—so on the higher stages of being will we function through an organism (the spiritual body or soul) ever progressing in refinement to bring us into relationship with other higher and progressive environments or schemes of existence. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

Browning has well expressed the loftier conception:—

I know this earth is not my sphere,
For I cannot so narrow me but that
I shall not exceed it.

Several *speculative* theories of great interest may be briefly reviewed. One great subject of enquiry is

DID THE SOUL PRE-EXIST?

Spiritualists are often accused of coming to conclusions on insufficient evidence, and being dominated by prejudice. That charge is certainly not true, for the critical faculty is exceedingly highly developed and strongly exercised by Spiritualists. Much as I respect them, my personal experience of them, compared to those of other phases and spheres of thought and activity, compels me to confess they are a tough lot, very hard to satisfy and convince.

With most Spiritualists who require *convincing grounds* for accepting any theory of life, I have never been able to accept the Theosophical idea of re-incarnation. Fortunately for myself, if I may be allowed to speak personally, a varied and rough experience of life has depressed or repressed any frail human tendency to over-estimate my self-importance. So I have never speculated whether I am the re-incarnated Moses, Jeremiah, or Queen of Sheba. Rest to their souls!

At the conclusion of an address in a Northern city, a grandiose and affected lady approached me and enquired "Mr. Young, have you lived on earth before?" I do not know if she imagined she had met me in some

previous earthly epoch, but I was compelled to reply "No, madam, I think not. Once on earth is enough." Henry Drummond sweetly expressed this thought when he gently said to his students who pleaded with him to avoid over-exertion, "I want to do all the good I can whilst on earth, because I might not be passing this way again."

THE SPIRITS' ANSWER.

Often when speaking to communicating spirits the question has been put, "Would you like to come back to the earth-life?" The reply is always a radiant but emphatic "No!" A recently-deceased miner, whom I knew, speaking to relatives in the home circle with a pathos impossible to express, exclaimed, "Mother! I loved my home on earth—its sweet ties of friendship and affection, its pleasant harmonies and surroundings, its labours of love—but oh! it cannot be compared to the home in which I now dwell, and to which I will soon welcome you."

"George Pelham," the communicating spirit-intelligence of the famous Piper seances—the brilliant literary man who was suddenly cut off at the age of thirty-two, and who so completely established his personal identity—assured us we do not lose by the change. When Dr. Hodgson asked him whether he had not gone too soon, he replied with emphasis, "No, Hodgson, no, not too soon."

NO NEED FOR THE THEORY.

From what has been revealed to us of the conditions of spirit-life, and from what we can trace of the unfoldment in knowledge, goodness, and perfection of spirit-people whom we know, we must conclude that there are opportunities and facilities sufficient in the spiritual world for experience, advancement, and progress. This renders it no more necessary for man to be re-born on earth than for the chicken to again pass through the embryonic stages in the prison-house or developing chamber of the egg.

The stories of past earth-lives are fantastic and speculative, but do not bear the strain of critical scrutiny. No *tests of identity* in that respect have been established. It must also be justly added that the theories of Theosophy have a very comforting effect upon some middle-class psychical investigators of warped sympathies and

narrowed outlook—affording an excuse for neglecting present human duties, To illustrate this accusation: Criminals, morally paralysed, and other degenerate specimens of humanity, are to be pitied and helped, not condemned. Benedikt well observes, “To kill the criminal is never satisfactory, because we do not kill his accomplices, bad social conditions and defective institutions.”

The verdict of science is one with that of the Nazarene, “Judge not.” Look at all sides of the case—the diseased organism, the unhealthy parental stock and vicious inherited tendencies, the defective educational nurture and insufficient nourishment of early life, and the degrading and depressing influences of the environment. Do not dismiss the subject with apathy by saying, “Oh! they have sinned in some previous incarnation.” Human solidarity is an established fact in sociology. The Spiritualist of enterprise, courage, and imagination is compelled to spend his energies in social service. Spiritual or psycho-therapeutic methods of treatment, he knows, may reclaim these degenerates to the normal level of citizen life, and thus our future hospitals, workhouses, asylums, and prisons may become receptacles for the ills and warpings of human nature, and converters of it into a nobler, more vigorous, and beautified manhood and womanhood.

Give me, therefore, the Spiritualist philosophy with its direct simplicity, its basis of ascertained and verifiable facts, its optimistic outlook, and its sweet human sympathies, and brotherhood.

The idea of re-birth is unsound—scientifically, philosophically, and practically.

WHAT IS BIRTH?

Birth may be regarded in some lofty way as a focussing of super-physical, spiritual, divine influences or forces which concentrate and aggregate to create the human soul, which incarnates in the physical organism, and which is compacted and consolidated by the experience—the joy, sorrow, suffering, duties and vicissitudes—of earth-life. Individuality, of noble and effective type, is developed as the ultimate purpose of life—here and hereafter.

Professor James, in an illuminating essay, has it: "Idealistic philosophy declares the whole world of natural experience, as we get it, to be but a time-mask, shattering or refracting the *one infinite Thought*, which is the sole reality, into those millions of finite streams of consciousness known to us as our private selves.

Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of eternity."

We live in two worlds at once—two interpenetrating spheres of activity,—functioning during waking moments in the world of physical phenomena, and also, but more fully during sleep, in the larger scheme of super-sensual, super-physical realities. The waking consciousness of earth life, confined by natural selection into the limits serviceable for mundane necessities, is only a fragment or selection from that larger consciousness "which reasserts itself in all its plentitude after the liberating change of death."

THE BODILY ARMOUR AND ENCASEMENT.

"The death of the body," says Kant, "may indeed be the end of the *sensational* use of our mind, but only the *beginning* of the intellectual use. The body would thus be not the cause of our thinking, but merely a condition restrictive thereof, and, although essential to our sensuous and animal consciousness, it may be regarded as an *impeder* of our pure spiritual life."

What a world of intense joys is opened to the developed psychic on rare occasions during trance, sleep, and ecstasy, when bodily activities are quiescent, and he rises superior to the organism. Fortunately for our return to possession of the body, the recollection of what transpires during healthy sleep (not the distorted nightmares of ill-health) is withheld, or rather cannot be translated or transmitted in terms of sensuous perception and experience.

Gradually we may perceive

WHY WE ARE INHABITING THE BODY.

A few concrete illustrations may help in making the conception clear. In physical experiments when the source of heat is too intense, the intervention of a screen to shut off a large proportion of heat-rays is employed. Had we too powerful an electric current we might lessen,

regulate, or inhibit the intensity by passing it along poor conductors like iron wire, which resist its passage and allow only a mild current to proceed for delicate experimental purposes. In photography, light-waves of powerful chemical nature or effect are shut off or regulated by vari-coloured glass windows, screens, or filters.

Mr. J. C. S. Schiller, with insight and power says: "The body is a mechanism for inhibiting consciousness, for *preventing the full powers of the Ego from being prematurely actualised*. . . . It will be during life that we drink the bitter cup of Lethe, it will be with our brain that we are enabled to forget. And this will serve to explain not only the extraordinary memories of the drowning and the dying generally, but also the curious hints which experimental psychology occasionally affords us that nothing is ever forgotten wholly and beyond recall."

SPIRIT PRESENCE.

An interesting and illuminating spirit communication received and recorded by a near relative revealed much to me in this respect. Like all Spiritualists, I have been misunderstood and misrepresented by relatives and acquaintances who lived the narrow and fear-regulated mode of life of conventionality and respectability. Their unkind accusations, their unjust criticism, shrinking horror, and cheap ridicule were apt to hurt, repel, and disgust one of sensitive nature. Recollections of their actions and dispositions were not of the pleasantest, and were not calculated to make them welcome guests in one's surroundings, either in the earthly state or after death in the spiritual condition. One, who had misunderstood and occasioned me much keen pain during earth life, had the blinding scales removed from the vision by physical death. Then regret was expressed, and a desire for undoing and recompense was evinced. Although conscious at times of the nearness of the newly-deceased, the old antipathies naturally asserted themselves, and the spirit was projected from the surroundings. Regarding this, my relative at a seance had the following message spelled out by the repentant spirit: "When I try to get near those whom on earth I misunderstood, I feel repelled as by the pressure of a volume of water. I cannot get near." What a light

that throws upon spirit presence. No spirit can harm us if we live good lives and assert our wills. They cannot get near. The familiar warning in the mouths of the timid, hysterical, and ignorant of "evil spirits" is

A MERE BOGEY-CRY,

and cannot stand rational examination.

On the other hand, if we desire to draw to us the lofty intelligences of spirit life our motives must be noble, our ideals high, and our lives healthy and pure. Otherwise we cannot provide the congenial atmosphere in which they can incarnate so as to directly influence us.

This points out the rationale and naturalness of spirit spheres and spirit bands.

On earth we are protected by the armour of flesh, and thought-force is deadened in intensity. Were we all completely and keenly responsive to the thoughts of others, were telepathic percipience developed to a high degree, how many friendships would be severed, how many agonised minds and broken hearts would result!

Even with our best friends we feel at times inharmonious and at disagreement. Suppose, as in spirit life, our inharmonious thoughts could repel them and waft them away, what a desert the earth would be for us all.

No, thank God! having a body, as it were, weights us down, and compels us to enter the atmosphere of those whom we, at first, misunderstand, and from whom we instinctively shrink. We are then compelled to look on matters with their eyes and from their point of view, and they, in turn, are similarly influenced. This is mutually educational and beneficial, and leads to a more full and rounded life.

SPIRIT CLOTHED IN MATTER.

Said the philosopher previously quoted: "Matter is an admirably calculated machinery for regulating, limiting, and restraining the consciousness which it encases.

. . . If the material encasement be coarse and simple, as in the lower organisms, it permits only a little intelligence to permeate through it; if it is delicate and complex, it leaves more pores and exits, as it were, for the manifestations of consciousness. . . . On this analogy, then, we may say that the lower animals are still

entranced in the lower stage of brute *lethargy*, while we have passed into the higher phases of *somnambulism*, which already permits us strange glimpses of a *lucidity* that divines the realities of a transcendental world. . . . Matter is not that which produces consciousness, but that which limits it, and confines its intensity within certain limits: material organisation does not construct consciousness out of arrangements of atoms, but contracts its manifestation within the sphere which it permits."

Thus the efforts necessitated by the task of overcoming the resistance or inertia of the material organism to make it a better conductor or instrument, develop the soul-forces. Hence the freedom and feeling of emancipation when the leaden mantle is thrown aside at death.

The earth life, then, is the grub or

CHRYSLIS STAGE OF EXISTENCE.

Edible grubs are protected from enemies by mimicry or harmoniously blending in colour with the leaves on which they feed. Gaudy, brightly-coloured caterpillars, visible at a distance, have a repellant odour or disagreeable taste, so that young birds to whom they are offered shrink from touching them in evident dread and abhorrence. Nature thus protects these soft-bodied creatures till the eternal life-processes are complete, because the least injury means almost certain death.

In his masterly study of "Genius" Myers has given us the following eloquent passage: "Surely we need not wonder if the mind and frame of man should not always suffice for smooth and complete amalgamation: if some prefiguration of faculties *adapted to a later stage of being* should mar the symmetry of the life on earth. An often-quoted analogy has here a closer application than is often apprehended. The grub comes from the egg laid by the winged insect, and a winged insect it must itself become; but meantime it must, for the sake of its own nurture and preservation, acquire certain larval characters—characters sometimes so complex that the observer may be excused for mistaking that larva for a perfect insect, destined for no further change save death. Such larval characters, acquired to meet the risks of a temporary environment, I seem to see in man's earthly strength and glory. I see the human analogies of the poisonous tufts which choke the captor—the atti-

tudes of mimicry which suggest an absent sting—the 'death's head' coloration which disconcerts a stronger foe. But meantime the adaptation to aerial life is going on; something of the imago or perfect insect is pre-formed within the grub, and in some species, even before they sink into their transitional slumber, the rudiments of wings still helpless protrude awkwardly beneath the larval skin."

Those who have stood by the bedside of the dying know how true this is to the facts of life; how, as the physical strength weakens, the deeper soul-faculties emerge. Then the faces of the dying become radiant with ineffable beauty as they recognise the loved ones gone from earth life, hear the divine harmonies which transcend human expression, and see the sights which mock all human grandeur.

CLAIRVOYANT DESCRIPTION OF DEATH.

Clairvoyants, with inner vision, have described the beautiful process of dying. A filmy, luminous atmosphere withdraws from the limbs and gathers in the region of the head. Presently in this cloud a form appears, the exact counterpart of the physical form on the couch below. A line of light—a spiritual umbilical cord—unites the two. Slowly this is severed, and the soul for ever quits its earthly tabernacle.

Shelley, who was a genius of remarkable psychic power and perception, sings of the soul leaving its earthly tenement:—

Sudden arose
 Ianthe's soul: it stood
 All beautiful in naked purity,
 The perfect semblance of its bodily frame.
 Instinct with inexpressible beauty and grace,
 Each stain of earthliness
 Had passed away, it reassumed
 Its native dignity, and stood
 Immortal amid ruin.

. . . 'twas a sight
 Of wonder to behold the body and soul.
 The self-same lineaments, the same
 Marks of identity were there:
 Yet, oh, how different! One aspires to Heaven,
 Pants for its sempiternal heritage,
 And ever-changing, ever-rising still
 Wantons in endless being.

Death, then, is the portal to a newer and higher life, of extended duties, loftier joys, and increased possibilities. This earth is the primary school of existence, not its originating station and terminus.

Life here we have seen incarnates in a protoplasmic vehicle or organism suitable for adjustment and response to the environment. The earth, then, is a theatre for the grand age-long panorama of the development of life. It provides facilities for the extreme delicacy of those adjustments, for the operation of those forces and those complex conditions of the environment that alone render physical life in any way possible.

Alfred Russel Wallace has thus enumerated:—"The physical conditions on the surface of our earth which appear to be necessary for the development and maintenance of living organisms may be dealt with under the following headings:—(1) Regularity of heat-supply, resulting in a limited range of temperature. (2) A sufficient amount of solar light and heat. (3) Water in great abundance, and universally distributed. (4) An atmosphere of sufficient density, and consisting of the gases which are essential for vegetable and animal life. These are oxygen, carbonic-acid gas, aqueous vapour, nitrogen, and ammonia. These must all be present in suitable proportions. (5) Alternations of day and night."

All these conditions are requisite to the maintenance of the integrity of the physical organism. Physical life is a function of organism and environment: a violent change in either term of the function spells death. We may practically distinguish between violent, microbic, and natural death.

Violent death, like that of a jelly-fish stranded on the beach, or a miner in a pit explosion, is due to sudden changes in the environment too powerful for the organism's power of response and adjustment.

Microbic death bulks largely in the mortality of organisms. It is that form of death brought about by the intrusion of bacteria when the health is depleted and bodily powers of resistance are imperfect. These poison the system with their waste products, choking the blood-vessels, causing fatal lesions, and setting up inflammation.

Natural death is due to the slow mounting up of physiological debts. The necessary wear and tear of the tissues is made good again by food and in rest, but the recuperation is not always complete. Natural death is that cessation of life which results from the accumulation of physiological arrears.

The modern biological conception worked out by Weismann and others regards death as incident on the complex organisation of the body.

Death comes to all men, and Spiritualists know it is a mere incident in the soul's progressive evolution.

PHYSICAL IMMORTALITY.

The theories of bodily immortality are now absurd, and to be laughed out of court. Some years ago a brilliant literary man, whom silly flattery and personal vanity had caused to degenerate into a crank, propounded the idea he was going to live eternally on earth in bodily form. Unfortunately the theory did not work. He died. One of his disciples tried to explain matters by saying, "Towards the end of his earthly career he became so spiritualised that his body faded from him." A vulgar critic would retort, "Rats! the undertaker put something in the coffin."

The exaggerated importance attached to the body by orthodox Christians, who believe in a physical resurrection, is illustrated by an anecdote related by a Dundee friend lately returned from South Africa. A young architect showed him what he claimed to be a photo of a complete family group. "But where is the mother?" asked my friend. "Oh!" responded the architect, "she was cremated. She is in that urn on the mantle-piece." My friend with difficulty restrained his laughter.

Finally we ask: Whither do I go when earth-duties are ended?

WHAT DESTINY AWAITS ME?

Neither science nor intuition recognise annihilation. In the beautiful drama of *Ion*, the *intuition of immortality* finds a deep response in every thoughtful soul. When about to yield his young existence as a sacrifice to fate, his beloved Clemanthe asks if they shall not meet again, to which he replies: "I have asked that dreadful question of the hills, that look eternal—of the clear streams that flow for ever—of the stars among whose fields

of azure my raised spirit hath walked in glory. All were dumb. But when I gazed upon thy living face, I feel that there is something in the love that mantles through its beauty that cannot wholly perish. *We shall meet again, Clemathe.*"

Sings our venerable pilgrim, Dr. J. M. Peebles, "The human spirit that ever was, is, and eternally will be, was incarnated for the purpose of receiving lessons and experiences, that through struggles, sufferings, and defeats, it might achieve grander victories, and be ultimately intromitted into a higher, diviner consciousness."

A future life, we know, is needed "for the working out of that moral completeness which the present never brings. We are cut off when we begin to be ready to do something in the world."

THE SPIRIT'S PROGRESS.

Souls enter the next life—what they are. Frequently I have been able to trace a little of the onward march of ex-carnate friends. Possessed of abundant virility, cheerfulness, broad human sympathies, having many spheres of thought to enter, being engaged almost wholly in altruistic work, and living in the radiant atmosphere of children which would melt the hardest heart and thaw the most icy, self-centred disposition, I am informed that I provide congenial conditions to waken up the dazed and bewildered newly-deceased people to the realities and necessities of their new state of life. Jerked into the after-life unprepared, or passing on after great bodily weakness, these newly born into spirit-life require much help. At first psychics describe them frequently close to the physical state, lost, confused, and perplexed. Presently they realise their whereabouts, the self-created mental and spiritual darkness is illuminated, and they appear more receptive, responsive, radiant, and virile. Spirit-guides then remove them to other spheres, where progress is fostered, and they are prepared for careers of usefulness. Their visits to earth-surroundings are then rarer, but of great sustaining and inspiring value.

SPIRIT-OCCUPATIONS.

Spirit-occupations might easily be understood. Work is the universal law. The next world must be sphere of fresh activity.

When "George Pelham" was asked in what consisted the occupation of spirits, he replied that they were like the noblest occupations of men, and consisted in helping others to advance. This contains a profound philosophic truth. If our varied occupations upon earth, says M. Sage, are regarded from a superior point of view, it will be seen that their ultimate end is the perfection of mankind. Those of us who have evolved furthest realise this and the others do not. The world has been compared to a crucible in which souls are purified by pain and work and prepared for higher ends. Willingly or not, consciously or unconsciously, we force one another to advance and to improve in all respects.

Progress is the law of life. Higher spirit-intelligences act by intermediaries or inspiration. They find as much difficulty in descending to our atmosphere as the diver in sinking to the depths of the ocean. At times I have been privileged to enjoy their presence. Bands of Indians have been engaged for a long time in preparing the seance room for their descent into our midst. A gauzy screen has been placed to lessen the effect of their effulgent radiance and keep back earth's impurities. The sitters have been bathed in an Arctic coldness, but, as the eloquent and uplifting messages and influences have been received, they have felt as if transported to the very gate of heaven. No human language can portray or express the exquisite delight and ecstasy, a foretaste of joys yet to be.

OUR LOFTY DESTINY.

In the inspired words of one writer, "Man makes his own destiny. He rises or falls in accordance with his own works. But a primordial and absolute law governs creation—the law of progress. Everything rises in the infinite. In the ascension of souls, the moral qualities have no less value than the intellectual qualities. The supreme aim of all beings is the perpetual approach to absolute perfection and divine happiness.

"The vast strides man has made during the short compass of his present earth-life in his march towards civilisation are a prophecy of the infinite possibilities before him in future, and death is only a stage in man's evolution upwards, only another name for birth, intro-

ducing him into another grander sphere of the eternal process moving on."

Such are the revelations and teachings of Modern Spiritualism.

In concluding this imperfect sketch, prepared in the midst of exhausting labours, I may be permitted to sound a personal note. Some ten years ago I held agnostic views, and maintained the materialist position. But light came to me regarding that question of questions, "If a man shall he live again?" And so for some years I have been engaged in presenting to others the newer truths and beauties of life as they have appealed to me. My work has lain largely among calm-minded, truth-loving agnostics, whose appreciation and keen criticism have been exceedingly helpful and stimulating. Knowing the content of the evidence and philosophy of Spiritualism, I can foresee the time when its revelations will be accepted by all, as naturally and inevitably as the flower turns to the sunlight.

Where personal evidence has been given with those who do not know me I cannot emphasise its evidential value, but merely say with Professor Barrett, "What a man asserts from his own experience is always worth listening to. What he denies is rarely worth attention." I have had no purpose to serve except to present the truths and beauties of the modern gospel.

Let me close with the following beautiful lines—amongst the latest products of Tennyson's genius:—

(The Question.)

Will my tiny spark of being
 Wholly vanish in your deeps and heights?
 Must my day be dark by reason,
 O ye heavens, of your boundless nights,
 Rush of suns and roll of systems,
 And your fiery clash of meteorites?

(The Answer.)

Spirit, nearing yon dark portal
 At the limit of thy human state,
 Fear not thou the hidden purpose
 Of that Power which alone is great,
 Nor the myriad world, His shadow,
 Nor the silent Opener of the Gate!

THE VALUE OF SPIRITUALISM.

SPIRITUALISM is a vast subject of vital importance to human life and progress.

SPIRITUALISM is a scientific philosophy of life based upon universal, ever-recurring facts or evidences. It supersedes the old and effete conceptions of truth, and gives us nobler and more rational views of God, nature, man, and destiny.

SPIRITUALISM demonstrates the natural immortality of the human soul, the truth of spirit-intercourse, and the grandeur of human existence.

SPIRITUALISM is the most powerful influence operating in religious life. Spiritualism furnishes the key for the interpretation of all religions. It shows God as Infinite Spirit—revealed as the Immanent Mind of the Universe—whose perfect wisdom is perfect love. All men being sons of God have infinite possibilities of attainment, and are subject to never-ending progress here and hereafter.

SPIRITUALISM presents to the world the highest ethical standard and noblest optimism ever taught to mankind. Spiritualism shows that the earth-life is the primary school of existence—where we develop faculty and gain experience. Souls enter the next life what they are, and will ultimately understand the necessary conditions for the attainment of good.

SPIRITUALISM directs mankind in the path of duty. It teaches universal brotherhood and service as the highest law of existence. It proclaims self-denial, nobility of purpose, purity of life, and sweet spirituality to be the ascending steps to heaven.

SPIRITUALISM is a powerful agency for promoting education and reform. It teaches temperance and healthy living to make the body the effective instrument of the soul. It reveals the power of the mind over the body and shows the strength of personal influence. It advocates better treatment of the diseased, the criminal, and the insane.

SPIRITUALISM shows the source of the strength, illumination and inspiration of men of genius who have blessed and uplifted the race.

SPIRITUALISM raises the status and ennobles the influence of woman.

SPIRITUALISM robs death of its superstition and terrors, and brings divine consolation to the sorrowing, suffering, and bereaved.

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